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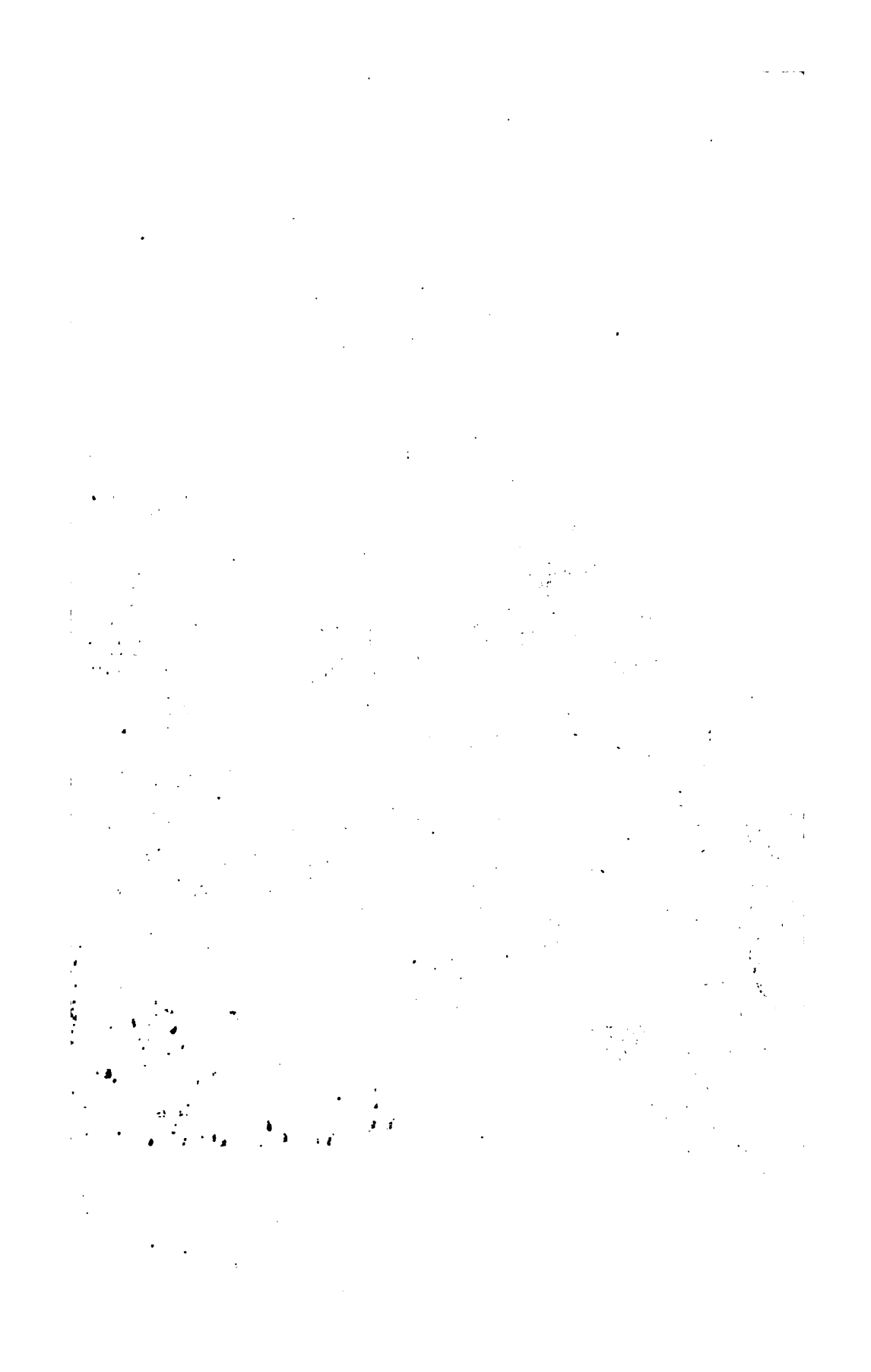
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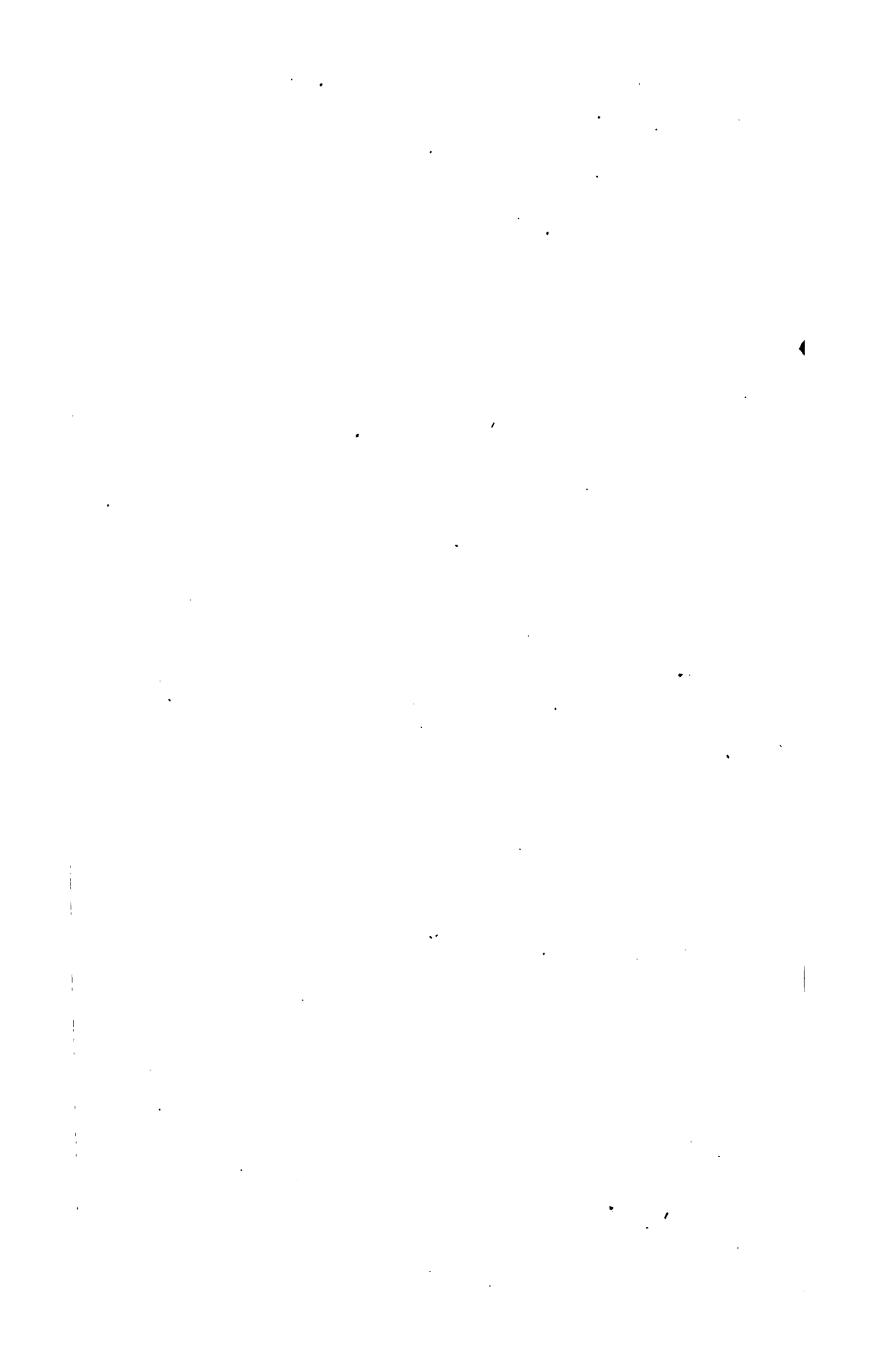


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**A VIEW**  
**OF THE**  
**CREATION OF THE WORLD,**  
**IN ILLUSTRATION**  
**OF THE**  
**MOSAIC RECORD.**

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**BY THE REV.**  
**CHARLES JAMES BURTON, M.A.**  
**VICAR OF LYDD, KENT;**  
**AND LATE MICHEL FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.**

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TO

THE HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

HUGH PERCY, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

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MY LORD,

WHEN I solicited the honour of your Lordship's protection of the following pages, it was not with the mere design of seeking for them a Patron of eminence, and so, under sanction of your name, of procuring them an introduction which they might not otherwise have had. I was actuated by motive of different kind. The friendship with which I have during many years been honoured by your Lordship, had its rise in the patronage condescended to me by one nearly allied to yourself; one, whom no man better knew, more appreciated, or has more lamented.

To the late Archbishop Manners Sutton I am indebted, under Providence, for all that I have. His kindly consideration, and his favourable opinion, were largely experienced by me. Through his patronage I obtained your friendship; which makes an acknowledgment of my obligation to him not improperly tendered to you; and I am assured that no expression can be so grateful to you as that which is reverential of the memory of him. Possessed of every quality befitting his high and responsible station; devoted on purest principle to the interests of the Church; vigilant, earnest, and untiring in her cause, he established for himself a reputation valuable and lasting,—a reputation fixed in the willing and general confession of sound and legitimate service. On this subject I will add no more. I was anxious to say thus much, both from an individual sense of duty, and my veneration of his Grace's exalted character. Your Lordship's own habits of confidential intercourse with him, your professional life passed so long and immediately under his eye, will bear a stronger testimony than can be urged by me.

I will now intreat your Lordship's reception of this work. It sets forward no pretension beyond

that of an effort to be useful; to lead to a study of Scriptural truth in a very important point, inadequate as may be the attempt to the momentousness of the subject. Too great jealousy of any approach towards an impugning of the validity of the Inspired Volume cannot be entertained; and he may, surely, be pardoned, whose zeal, if not indeed justified by his ability, is yet founded in a genuine conviction, and supported by a sincerity of purpose. Your Lordship will believe that I am thus influenced; and by you this brief apology will be looked on with an indulgent regard.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

With sentiments of deep and grateful respect,

Your Lordship's most obliged

And faithful servant,

CHARLES JAMES BURTON.

LYDD VICARAGE,  
*Feb. 1, 1836.*



## P R E F A C E.

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THE following pages are offered with no presumptuous feeling ; with no expectation or desire that they should obtain a credit not in strictest justice their due. It is the object of them, by drawing the attention more closely to the Inspired Volume, to endeavour the promotion of truth ; in times, when the mind of man is somewhat too apt, through eagerness of inquiry, to go beyond its right limits, to shew, however humbly, the necessity, if it would not incur the perils of absurdity and falsehood, of adhering to the only rule which is capable of maintaining it in a safe direction. Plain truths are stated in ordinary terms, and proved on ordinary grounds. Nothing, perhaps, is accomplished, which very many persons would not have done with as much or greater correctness ; and no pretension is arrogated of a better knowledge, or a deeper inquiry. The work is addressed to those who seek not gratification in ingenious theories, or inviting fancies ; who disregard not reality because it presents itself in simple form ; who despise not the industry which



would collect proofs, and place them in connection, as a more advantageous employment than the bolder proposal of novelty of system. The Mosaic account of the Cr ation is insisted on in its single and literal meaning. Controversy, nevertheless, is not challenged; no matter is introduced which would perplex the mind, or distract the attention, of the uncontroversial reader; it is rather sought to secure from any such perplexity than to lead into it. The writer trusts, that, where the intelligence is satisfied with the correctness of the history of Moses, in our usual acceptance of his language, any attempt of the theorist, whether of him who may be desirous of superseding it altogether, or of him, of whom if the purpose be not so mischievous yet the effect of it if successful would be equally so, will be futile; he trusts that, once established, the conviction will be impregnable to attack. He is aware, that an interpretation has been put on statements of this history, which the words, literally construed, do not admit; and he by no means wishes here to impute a design of invalidating the authority of Moses; but, he cannot avoid seeing, that, the literal interpretation departed from, no conclusive or satisfactory account is to be had; and that the world would eventually be thrown into as much obscurity

regarding creation as it had fallen into before the delivery of this history: it would have no standard. His own careful examination has rooted in him the belief that Moses intended his account to be literally received; and he is fortified in it by the opinions and arguments of theologians of acknowledged capability. Besides this, he has been desirous of inducing a nearer regard of the works of creation, in order to a fuller knowledge and service of the Creator Himself. The more we look into ourselves and every thing about us; the more we search,—submissively it is meant to the Revealed Word,—the more reason shall we have for love and obedience of the Great First Cause. This is a study well becoming God's best work below, His immortal creature: hence may he learn, what he is, and what he is designed to be; hence may he know, what has been done for him; what wonders have been brought to pass for his comfort and happiness; and, by consequence, what thankfulness is due to his Gracious Benefactor. The works of God are worthy to be inquired of; and, if the inquiry be conducted on Scriptural warrant, in a deferential following of the Revelation which God has vouchsafed of them, the inquirer must needs rise from it a wiser and a better man. Every step he advances in the knowledge of

God and of his own duty, will be a step in godliness ; he will understand how his obligations are increased, and will regulate his practice accordingly. If this Work have any such effect, its purpose will be abundantly answered, and the labour bestowed upon it amply repaid. When it was entered on, it was in other form, and with a view to personal satisfaction. The progress of it, however, opened a prospect of which this is the result ; and that method of inquiry, which had been beneficial in the Writer's own case, and had confirmed his previous persuasions, seemed to be possessed of a likelihood to operate after the same manner with others. Thus it is, without further remark, that he offers it to the public ; unambitious of recompence, except the credit of having endeavoured to be useful ; and, to be adjudged useful, in the degree and the instance in which he has endeavoured, is merit enough for the most anxious of the reputation of it.

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# SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF CREATION.

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## CHAPTER I.

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In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light : and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good : and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

“ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” In these few and simple words is exhibited the great event of the creation of heaven and earth ; and, few and simple as they are, it must be admitted that the character of the work, and the majesty of the Author, could not have been more appropriately declared, or more triumphantly vindicated. “ God created the heaven and the earth.” There is no previous description of this mighty One : there is no general assertion of his omnipotence ; none of his eternity ; none of his goodness. The inspired writer was, too aware that no other than an omnipotent, an

eternal, and a perfectly good Being, could have called up this wondrous scene; he, therefore, as more consistent with the dignity of such claims, satisfies himself with a bare announcement of the fact, leaving it to be of necessity implied, that He, who had thus done, who had thus designed and formed, was in essential possession of every attribute of divinity. Consequently, if it be asked, Who is God? the answer is to be found in the statement of the work of Creation. If it be asked, What is God? the answer is likewise there. He is the creating power; He, that existed before all things; the great Parent and Governor of all<sup>1</sup>. The word "God" doth, indeed, convey to our

<sup>1</sup> God, whom the wisest men acknowledge to bee a power uneffable, and vertue infinite, a light by abundant claritie invisible; an understanding which itselfe only can comprehend, an essence eternall and spirituall, of absolute purenesse and simplicity; was and is pleased to make Himselfe known by the work of the world: in the wonderful magnitude whereof (all which He imbraceth, filleth, and sustaineth), wee behold the image of that glory which cannot be measured, and withall that one, and yet universal Nature, which cannot bee defined. In the glorious lights of heaven, we perceive a shadow of His divine countenance; in His mercifull provision for all that live, His manifold goodnesse; and lastly, in creating and making existent the world universall, by the absolute art of His owne Word, His power and almightinesse; which power, light, vertue, wisdom, and goodnesse, being all but attributes of one simple Essence, and one God, we in all admire, and in part discern, *per speculum creaturarum*, that is, in the disposition, order, and variety of celestiall and terrestriall bodies: terrestriall, in their strange and manifold diversities; celestiall, in their beauty and magnitude; which in their continuall and contrary motions, are neither repugnant, intermixt, nor confounded. By these potent effects, we approach to the knowledge of the

minds, thoughts, and feelings, persuasions and convictions, of highest interest and value. In this place, there is no obligation to which it doth not give force: our dependence, our duty, our gratitude, hence strike upon us in effectual and most admirable manner. This awful name stands forward as the designation by which Omnipotence will be known amongst His inferior creatures; and it seems to have been specially for this purpose introduced to our notice, in that first act which commanded the existence and establishment of the visible world. "God created."—Brief as is the expression, what an immensity of intelligence doth it carry with it! The being of a God, one and indivisible, is authoritatively revealed; for, with a one God is associated no other in this exercise of power: the origin of the world is referred to His will, and as in necessary subjection unto it. It is said, "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,*"—the meaning of which words is, that in the order of creation they were first made; that they were brought into being before the appointment of other distinct material objects, all else having direction to proceed from them as the intermediate source between themselves and the Creator; and this heaven and this earth now comprise in their description the firmament above, wherein we behold the sun, the moon, and the stars; and the material globe below, the earth and the waters. There needs no argument to prove, that ere the host of heaven could have their places as Omnipotent Cause, and by these motions, their Almighty Mover.

—RALEIGH.

signed to them in that firmanent, that firmanent itself must have been made ; or that, ere plants and animals, which were intended to grow and to be formed from the earth, could so grow and be formed, the earth itself must have been made ; wherefore, the full and undeniable meaning of the words, “in the beginning,” will be immediately seen ; that is, the essential priority of what are termed “heaven and earth” in the work of creation ; it will be seen, that they purpose we should understand from them—first, and before all things, wherewith creation was concerned. “The action by which the heaven and the earth were made,” I use the language of the learned expositor of the Creed<sup>1</sup>, “considered in reference to the effect, I conceive to be the production of their total being ; so that whatsoever entity they had when made, had no real existence before they were so made. And this manner of production we usually term creation, as excluding all concurrence of any material cause, and all dependence of any kind of subject, as presupposing no privation, as including no motion, as signifying a production out of nothing ; that is, by which something is made, and not anything preceding out of which ’tis made. This is the proper and peculiar sense of the word creation : not that it signifies so much by virtue of its origination or vulgar use in the Latine tongue ; nor that the Hebrew word used by Moses, ‘In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth,’ hath of itself any

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Pearson.

such peculiar acception. For it is often used synonymously with words which signify any kind of production or formation, and by itself it seldom denotes a production out of nothing, or proper creation, but most frequently the making of one substance out of another pre-existing, as the fishes of the water, and man of the dust of the earth; the renovating or restoring any thing to its former perfection, for want of Hebrew words in composition; or lastly, the doing some new or wonderful work, the producing some strange and admirable effect, as the opening the mouth of the earth, and the signal judgments on the people of Israel. We must not, therefore, weakly collect the true nature of creation from the force of any word, which by some may be thought to express so much, but we must collect it from the testimony of God the Creator, in his Word, and of the world created, in our reason."

The four next following verses are descriptive of the primary condition of the earth, and of the method or process, which, as it actually was employed, so our own reason even would tell us was that which ought to have been employed, for the reducing of it to its desired arrangement. "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And the evening and

the morning were the first day." The simple act of the creation of the original matter having been set forth, we are informed of the instant appearance and condition of the earth. It was "without form;" it was "void;" and "darkness was upon" it. It "was without form:" it had neither shape nor method: it was a confused heap, consisting of mingled soil and water, the one unseparated from the other; and neither one having power of itself to settle into a substance independent of the other: there was no distinction of parts; there was no product. It was "void." There was no present capacity of product; as there was neither living being, nor plant, nor herb, nor tree, so was there no innate power to produce them. "Darkness was upon" it: an awful and dread-eloquent close of the statement. Whilst the darkness continued, there could not be either shape, or form, or faculty of production. With this statement we are satisfied; we bow to the truth of it; we feel that it could not have been otherwise; our own means of reasoning, and the rules by which we are guided in our ordinary inferences, ascertain us of its exactness; and we readily acknowledge, that, until the primeval darkness were removed or dissipated, the earth could assume or bear no different state or position. The Almighty now sets Himself to apply this great chaotic mass to its intended use: He had prepared the material, and, like a good workman, He was next to bring it into proper form and bearing; and we are consequently told, that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This sentence is exceed-

ingly important, and, from the attention which has been drawn towards it, naturally calls for somewhat of explanatory comment. We have of it two principal and widely-differing interpretations. It is one,—That a wind passed over for consolidation of the mass, the term “Spirit of God” being figuratively used to denote the vehemence of that element, as well as that the element itself is frequently denominated the breath of Heaven, or of God; but this interpretation or construction is, I think, altogether erroneous: both would such a process be out of the necessary order of creation, and the expression itself be unsuitable to a definition of the process. If it had been the action of the wind whereby the mass was consolidated, or the waters were dried up, or borne to their appointed place or use, it would throw an inconsistency or contradiction upon an after-statement, in which the waters are said to be “gathered into one place,” and “the dry land” is made to “appear;” and this we might take to be a sufficient refutation, since, if we assented to the proposition, we should be assenting to a manifest absurdity; we should be setting out with a difficulty, with an impediment which would greatly stand in the way of further regular construction; besides which, we should be introducing a natural effect before natural causes were ordained. It is the other interpretation,—That the words “Spirit of God” are words to be used in their plain and obvious sense; that they intend the High God himself, in His own supreme capacity;



that they intend the Third Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, each of whom is God, Almighty and Eternal, while there is but One God. It is no part of my present design to enter into any explanation or defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, or to institute any inquiry into that branch of our religious faith which relates to the properties of the Godhead. I do but state the fact, as it is recognised by us; and I assume that all to whom I address myself believe on this point as I believe, that is, that they follow herein the doctrine of our Church. God is the acknowledged Creator; He is manifested to us as engaged in this work; and now, after the creation of the material, all being placed in readiness for succeeding operation, and in a state for being modelled into its various purposes, what could be more proper, or what should seem more natural, than that He should be described as descending unto it, as resting upon it, as "moving upon" it, as borne or carried over it? He rested upon the waters, upon the fluctuating mass which is called "waters," by reason of its fluidity, causing it to feel the first influences of existence<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The Spirit of God cannot denote in this place, with the Arabic version, "the winds of God;" or with Dr. Geddes and others, "a mighty strong wind blowing upon the face of the waters;" for neither *air* nor *wind* were yet in existence. It must, therefore, denote the Holy Spirit. The kind of motion, implied in the original, elsewhere denotes the *fluttering* of an eagle over its nestlings (Deut. xxxii. 11), or a gentle tremulous motion. Hence seems to have arisen that fiction of heathen mythology, that the

"By His Spirit," says Job, "He hath garnished the heavens." The Psalmist—"Thou sendest forth thy spirit, and they are created." And Isaiah—"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed *the Spirit of the Lord*? or being His counsellor, hath taught Him?" In the preceding sentence, it is said that "darkness was upon the face of the deep;" and "the face of the waters" is an expression of similar meaning; and the presence of the Creator, as we are quickly informed, has for its object, in the first case, the dissipation of this darkness. It is the special office of the Holy Spirit to bestow light and life, the former in order to the latter; and although the earth and the waters had been commanded into being, they as yet had in them no principle of animation; all was dark and lifeless; and, clearly enough, ere light and life could be produced from the mass, the faculty of production must have been given; and it being, as I have said, the office of the Third Person in the Godhead to impart the principle of life, He is in this

world was produced from an egg by incubation. Milton has finely paraphrased the passage, taking also the descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism into consideration (Luke iii. 22).

"Thou, from the first,

Wast present; and with mighty wings outspread,  
Dove-like sat'st brooding o'er the vast abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant."

DR. HALES.

place, with utmost fitness of terms and signification, represented as in the act of imparting it. The capability was assigned, and the specific uses remained to be thereafter adapted and appointed. At this stage of the proceeding, God commands, "Let there be light," and at it there is "light." The earth, or the world, in its substance, was created, and a vivifying power had been bestowed; and the next step towards the application to its design was the gift of light, the rescue of it from its original darkness. The expression is simple, as in each other respective instance of the command of creation; it contains but the command, the Majesty of the Creator not admitting amplification, and the word of God being powerful to every thing: in truth, creation altogether depended on that Word, and by the Word was all that is called into existence: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made." What was this light? is the question which now attaches to the subject. There was as yet neither sun nor moon: the creation of them, and of the stars, was on the fourth day. It is unsuitable to a purpose like my present to enter into a set and full discussion of a matter, embracing so vast a compass of inquiry as this; all that may be satisfactorily and usefully done, will be to state the received opinion on the content of the particular text. The light here said to be produced, we consider to be the primary quality

or matter of light, whatever it was; the principle from which all light, as we have it, was produced, together with heat; and which, at the time spoken of, was diffused throughout the whole system. "It seems to me," says the Commentator<sup>1</sup>, "most rational by this light to understand those particles of matter, which we call fire, (whose two properties every one knows are light and heat,) which the Almighty Spirit that formed all things, produced as the great instrument, for the preparation and digestion of the rest of the matter; which was still more vigorously moved and agitated from the top to the bottom by this restless element, till the purer and more shining parts of it, being separated from the grosser, and united in a body fit to retain them, became light." That light is really a created principle, the following verse assures us: "And God saw the light, that it was good:"—He examined it, and pronounced it to be in harmony with His intention, and fitted to its object. "And God divided the light from the darkness." It was made capable of division: it had its place assigned to it. It is not said that darkness was created by God, although it was ordained to have its course and place. Darkness is but the privation, or the absence, or the want of light, and where light is not, must necessarily be; it is not, however, a principle, it is only a state or condition. "And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night." He gave to each one its

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

office and its name; enacting, that they should succeed in regular constancy, the one to the other, their complete motion forming that space of time which we call a day<sup>1</sup>. The creation afterwards of the great

<sup>1</sup> The earliest measure of time on record is the day. In that most ancient and venerable account of the Creation by Moses, the process is marked by the operations of each day—"The evening and the morning were the first day," &c. Here the word "day" denotes the civil or calendar day of twenty four-hours, including "the evening," or natural night, and "the morning," or natural day; while the sun is either above or below the horizon of any place in the course of the earth's diurnal rotation, between two successive appulses of the same meridian to the sun; corresponding, therefore, to a solar day in astronomy.

It is remarkable, that "the evening," or natural night, precedes "the morning," or natural day, in the Mosaic account. Hence the Hebrew compound, (translated) "Evening morning," is used by the prophet Daniel, to denote a civil day, in his famous chronological prophecy of the 2300 days. And also the Greek compound, *νυχθημερον*, to denote the same. And hence Hesiod, the oldest of the Greek Poets that have reached us, represents the occultation of the Pleiades as lasting "forty days and nights," i. e. calendar days. And following the primeval order, the ancient Gauls and Germans counted times and seasons by the number of nights, not of days; as we learn from Cæsar and Tacitus: a usage still retained by their descendants; for, in old French, *anuit* signifies "to-day;" and in English, *seven-night*, *fortnight*, "seven days," "fourteen days." Thus is Sacred History verified by primitive tradition, handed down to the present times; "the night seeming to usher in the day." *Dr. Hales.*

Chronologers have generally supposed, that the civil day began at sunset, according to primitive usage. But this is a mistake: it did not begin till night-fall; till the end of day light, and commencement of twilight, at the first appearance of the stars after sunset; which begins as soon as the sun has arrived at a depres-

lights, made the work more glorious and complete ; but day and night were, we see, appointed before the creation of either the sun, or the moon, or the stars : these were not necessary to the original being of those other, notwithstanding the rule over the day, and over the night, was given to them in charge and keeping. Day and night previously existed, but had not reached to the perfection to which they were constituted able to reach, and to which these planets assisted their advance. Yet, the principle was already formed, and, as a principle, was "good" or perfect. A recent writer <sup>1</sup>, in his "Sacred History of the World," has the following passage hereupon :—  
"The next act of the Deity was to make a boundary,

sion of twelve degrees below the horizon ; when stars of the first magnitude begin to shine. But this does not take place till near an hour after sunset in the temperate zones. Nor is it full night, till the sun is depressed about eighteen degrees ; when the smallest stars become visible ; and starlight shines out in all its lustre, as soon as the milky way makes its appearance, at about twenty degrees of depression. The evening twilight, therefore, or night-fall, is the natural limit between day and night ; as the morning twilight, or dawn, or day break, is, on the other hand, the natural limit between night and day.

On this astronomical distinction was founded the Jewish Law : "From evening unto evening ye shall hallow your sabbath." *Levit. xxiii. 32.* That is, "from evening twilight, until evening twilight again." For the most skilful commentators assure us, that "the Sabbath among the Jews was always reckoned to begin from the first appearance of the stars on Friday evening, and to end at their appearance again on the day we call Saturday." *Id.*

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sharon Turner.

or division, between the effect of the visible presence or action of light, and that darkness which arises from its latent state, or disappearance; calling the duration of our luminous sense of it 'day,' and the time of its absence 'night.' Their succession was made to constitute that portion of time which we designate by a natural day. The evening and the morning were the first day. Our earthly day, is that space of time in which our globe turns once completely round. This section of time, which we subdivide into twenty-four parts, or hours, does not depend upon the sun, nor arise from it. As it is only an entire rotation of the earth, it could occur as well without a solar orb as with one. The annual circuit, or a year, which is the completed orbit of the earth round this luminary, could not take place without a sun; but a day requires the existence and revolving motion of the earth alone. This is mentioned by Moses, as beginning before the sun was made the centre of our astronomical system. As this fact denotes the diurnal movement to be distinct from the sun, and independent of it, it is another instance of the correctness of the Mosaic account. The first rotation of the earth round its own axis made the interval of the first day, and each subsequent revolution constituted the several days which succeeded. One planet might cease to turn round in this diurnal continuity, and might yet circle round the sun in its yearly course. The moon moves in this way about our earth, for it has no rotatory motion. The cause of our earth's revolving round its axis, is quite dis-

tinnet from the double and mutually counteracting forces which produce its annual orbit. Physics have not discovered, nor can rational conjecture assign any reason for, the diurnal rotation, except the commanding will and exerted power of the divine Creator."

Thus passed the first day of the creation. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." The heaven and the earth were called into being. Light was created, as the first principle by which they were to be affected. Time was ordained. The light was divided from the darkness, and to each was given its work and its boundary, from which it could not depart, and which it could in no wise transgress. It was a mighty act; a stupendous operation; a magnificent design; and, what lessons doth it convey to our minds! With what feelings doth it affect us! All that we see, was once—Nothing. Its beginning is brought to us by a certain date. We can fix ourselves on the point of time when the generation of the world commenced its course. The power, wisdom, and goodness, of one Being, gave to it life, and beauty, and strength. The fertile field, the vast forest, the noble river, the measureless sea, the glorious firmament, the sun, the moon, and the stars, were the production of His word. With what notions of the greatness and benevolence of Him who made them what we see them to be, ought all this to inspire us! with what deep thoughts of reverential and awful wonder! with what strong and sincere resolutions of faith in His revelations, and of obedience to His commands! For, of what effect must be the



might of Him to destroy, who was thus mighty to create! And, how vast, how unspeakable, the goodness, which was willing to create with purpose so benevolent and useful! There is every reason wherefore we should bend in lowliness and in gratitude. The Creator, who is thus revealed to us, is He on whom we are dependent; who governs and sustains us; in whose hands are our destinies to-day and for ever. We may derive much profit from an often recurring to these grand operations; how "of old He laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of His hands;" we shall be taught duly to estimate the value of worldly goods and acquirements; and to use them but in subservience to the will of the God from whom they have proceeded. His are both they and ourselves, and according to His known intention ought they to be applied. Let every arrogant thought be put away, and every high imagination be cast down. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever He had formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting He is God." Let us, moreover, be satisfied in ourselves, that this, the Bible account, of the origin of the world, is true; and be thankful for the kindness which hath given us so credible a history. We have abundant cause for faith in the verity of the Holy Scriptures; and the whole conduct, therein displayed, of Him who claims creation to Himself, may be received as ample proof that it must be as He says. From other sources we have had other accounts; but none of them carry

even probability with them. They possess neither reason nor proof. They are but the unsupported fancies of men; and every advance mankind have made in knowledge has tended to the exposure of their absurdity. It has not been so with the information we obtain from the Bible. *It* is all supported both by proof and by reason; and every advance in knowledge has tended to corroborate and confirm it. We may hencefrom be preserved from much fallacy, and from much sin: for, let us be assured, that to ascribe creation to any inferior agent is sin; that to conceit ourselves that we can fix it on other ground, and reconcile it to other cause, than it has pleased Him, the Great Creator, and First Cause, to reveal to us, is a most heinous sin. If we had been placed in an ignorance of this Omnipotent Author, it is plain that we could not render him the obedience which is due: and it is undoubtedly to be supposed, that so great and good a Being would not have performed His work of creation, and at the same time have left us without an influencing and a sufficient memorial of Himself. All men, certainly, have not had the revelation delivered to them, with which we have been blessed; still, as said Barnabas and Paul to the inhabitants of Lystra, "The living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein—left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." It is apparent in reason, in addition to this witness which is unto all

men, that he would give such a memorial as we have in the Scriptures; and this is the only account, as being systematic in its intelligence, which even pretends to Divine authority: of all other schemes, theories, and fancies, there are none that set up a claim to the impress of divinity. They are purely the invention of men, except where they have been formed on corrupt traditions of primeval or Bible statements. The heathen mythology is evidently such a corruption; and, so far, is a testimony, and not a slight one, to their truth. Let us, therefore, be thankful, not only for the act of creation, but, likewise, for this merciful revelation of it: let us praise and bless God for either, showing our gratitude and sincerity by an undeviating faith, and a steady following of every rule of holiness and virtue.

## CHAPTER II.

## GENESIS i. 6—8.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament : and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

GOD had, as we have seen, created the heaven and the earth, that is, he had made, and ordered into their designed and proper substance, this visible globe wherein we hold our being, and that upper region in which it was his purpose that those great and glorious orbs, the sun, the moon, and the stars, should have their place, and exercise their office or appointment. He had, likewise, created the light, whose influence upon the whole was so necessary ; He had perceived it to be “good,” or perfect in its kind, and fitted to its object ; He had divided it from the darkness, arranging the distinction, and commanding the respective duties, of day and of night. This was the work of the first day, of the day from which our world dates its original. So much was done. The material was provided, from which what-

ever else the Divine wisdom had in design should be drawn and framed. Now, therefore, it was that "God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." By the words of this command, we are to understand, that He caused the division of the mass above from the mass beneath; that He separated the one from the other, in order, amongst His purposes of wisdom and goodness, to prevent the newly-formed system from again becoming into that chaos and confusion whence it had been delivered; *therefore* "God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament." This firmament, which we are afterwards told "God called Heaven," is that vast expanse of air which parts the region of the clouds, here denominated the waters above the firmament, from the earth, here, after similar method and with similar design of construction, denominated the waters under the firmament, and called waters, because that the earth, peculiarly so termed, was not yet separated from the fluid wherewith at creation it was commingled. We are aware, from the pouring down of rain, that large quantities of water are contained in the region or space above; and, at this point of the history, information is given us that they are prevented from overwhelming the parts beneath them—and which of necessary consequence they would do if there were no intervening obstacle—by that expanse or substance which we commonly designate heaven, but which is, in reality

mid-air, and which the Almighty Creator, in the beginning, made to be of so great weight and power as to contain within itself force enough to bear it up, and to be capable of offering such a body and protection as should avert from the earth, over which it depended or was poised, any mischievous effect from the pressing down of the waters that rested upon it. This is that firmament, fast substance, or expanse, that "heaven," which is "stretched out like a curtain," and "spread as a tent;" and it is that of which the Psalmist speaks, where he says, "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures;" and which expressions Jeremiah in the following manner reiterates: "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures." This is that firmament, which God is in this place or at this time stated to have made and established. "This Region of the Air," observes our Commentator<sup>1</sup>, "manifestly parts the waters above it in the clouds, from those below it, here upon earth; the one of which bears a good proportion, and are in some measure equal unto the other; for there are vast trea-

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

tures of waters in the clouds, from whence the waters here below, in springs and rivers are supplied. This appeared afterwards in the deluge, which was partly made by continued rain for many days. The great objection against this exposition is, that now there were no clouds, neither had it, after this rained on the earth. But it must be considered, that neither were the waters below as yet gathered into one place: and, therefore, Moses here speaks of the air, as a body intended to be stretched between the waters above and beneath, when they should be formed." The clouds, I think, he might with more exactness have described as the pressure of the waters upon the air, when it in any degree yields to their weight; for the purpose of letting them down, or suffering them to press through, upon the earth. It has been intimated, that the word "heaven," which is applied to the present use, signifies the upper expanse<sup>1</sup>. That

<sup>1</sup> "After that the Spirit of God had moved upon the waters, and light was created, God said, *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters*: that is, those waters which by rarefaction and evaporation were ascended, and those of the earth and sea. But these waters separate above this extension, which the Latine Translation calleth *firmamentum*, or *expansum*, (for so *Vatablus*, *Pagninus*, and *Junius* terme it) are not the crystalline heavens, created in the imaginations of men; which opinion *Basilus Magnus* calleth a childish supposition, making in the same place many learned arguments against this infancie. For the waters above the firmament, are the waters in the ayre above us, where the same is more solid and condense, which God separated from the neather waters by a firmament, that is, by an extended distance and vast space: the words *Raquia*,

which we in excellence call "heaven," is the seat of the eternal Majesty; and in scripture is frequently

which Montanus writeth *Rakiagh*, and *Shamaiim*, being indifferently taken for the heaven and for ayre, and more properly for the ayre and *æther*, than for the heavens, as the best Hebricians understand them, *Quo suprema ac tenuia ab infimis crassis diducta, intersectaque distarent*, for that, *whereby the supreme and thin bodies were placed in distance, being severed and cut off from low and grosser matters*: and the waters above the firmament, expresst in the word *Maiim*, are in that tongue taken properly for the waters above the ayre, or in the uppermost region of the same. And that the word heaven is used for the ayre, the scriptures every where witnesse; as in the blessings of *Joseph*, and in the 104th Psalm: "*By these springs shall the fowle of the heaven dwell; and upon Sodome and Gomorriha it rained brimstone and fire out of the heaven; and in Isaac's blessing to Jacob; God give thee therefore of the dew of heaven: and in Deuteronomy the 11th. But the land whither you goe to possesse it, is a land that drinketh water of the rayne of heaven; and in Job, Who hath ingendred the frosts of heaven; and in St. Matthew, Behold the fowles of heaven, for they sow not.* So as in all the Scriptures of the Old Testament throughout, is the word heaven verie often used for ayre, and taken also hyperbolically for any great height, as, *Let us build us a tower, whose top may reach to heaven*, etc. And in this verie place *Basil* avoucheth, that this appellation of heaven for the firmament, is put by way of similitude: his owne words be these; *Et vocavit Deus firmamentum cælum. Hæc appellatio alii quidem propriè accommodatur, huic autem nunc ad similitudinem; And God called the firmament heaven: This appellation, (saith Basil) is properly applied to another, (that is, to the starrie heaven,) but to this (that is, to the firmament dividing the waters,) it is imposed by similitude.* And if there were no other prooffe, that by the firmament was meant the ayre, and not the heaven, the wordes of Moses in the eighth verse, conferred with the same word firmament, in the twentieth verse, make it manifest: for in the eighth



expressed as the highest heaven, and the heaven of heavens. It was no part of the intention, neither was it of the capacity, of Moses, to speak of the nature of it. God had not revealed it to him. He was but commissioned and enabled to acquaint us with the origin and formation of the heaven and the earth with which we are conversant ; that is, the firmament above, and the earth and the waters beneath : the world which was then created, and it alone, was that whose generations he was commanded to deliver. We call God's eternal, invisible, and incomprehensible mansion, by the same appellation of "heaven," because we have no other word, whereby more appropriately to distinguish it. His mansion is that, which is higher, more blessed, and more perfect, than any thing we can conceive : indeed, there is no power in mortal language, or thought, to form image or conception at all approaching in signification or likeness to its height, or its perfectness. Infinity cannot in any instance of it be compassed ; if it could, then would it not cease to be Infinity ? We, therefore, as of necessity, employ for conveyance to ourselves and others, of our meaning concerning it, a

verse it is written, that God called the firmament, which divided waters from waters, heaven ; and in the twentieth verse, he calleth the firmament of heaven, ayre, in these words : *And let the fowle fly upon the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*"—Raleigh.

The argument, both of Raleigh and of Basil, has the like point with that I would propose ; notwithstanding, as will presently be seen, I differ from them in the primary application of the term "heaven."

word which designs the highest point we can aim at, in ocular or mental vision. We cannot measure the distance, even of what is in this passage called heaven; we know not its limits, and this being the term nearest in significance to the object we would understand, we do thus apply it. We mean, when we speak of heaven as God's seat, something which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to understand." We do in a like manner, and with a like intention, often apply terms which in no degree contain a full description of the object they would present, but which are the nearest, and the most significant, and the best with which our language in its essential imperfectness, when it would shadow out objects which are beyond its faculty of expression, will supply us; and this is in no particular more remarkable than in the terms we make use of in our mention of the Deity, his attributes, or his majesty. We call him Father, and we call him Lord; yet these appellations do but weakly convey the extensive sense in which he is Father and Lord. Imperfectness, let it be repeated, cannot adequately express or figure that which is perfect. The terms are employed in human sense amongst ourselves; we have earthly fathers, and earthly lords: nevertheless, in how infinitely more comprehensive a sense is God our Father and our Lord! He is the First Cause of all: every thing and every being sprang from his command and his breath: "Without him," without his "word, was not any thing made that was made." In how distant a degree,

doth an earthly father stand, in comparison of him ! Who can measure it ? We have, however, no better term by which we would speak of him in the capacity which we design in it. It conveys to us all regarding it that we are able to receive. With similar view and feeling, we call him Lord : still does that word altogether express his omnipotence ? Do we by it intend to put him on any line of comparison with earthly lords ? We can have no such intention. We cannot, as we confess, *fittly* designate him, and we use the word, as suited to our own capabilities, and not as descriptive of him. What word, again, will impart a just idea of his wisdom and goodness ? They are boundless, and not to be expressed as in real definition. Our terms, in reference to those attributes, are the highest and the most significant in meaning of any whereof we are masters ; and they are the same which we apply when speaking of those qualities as existing in his inferior creatures ; but how unspeakable is the disproportion ! We call God, wise and good ; and the words are in his case infinitely short of their object. We call man, wise and good ; and the words picture him in higher character than is his due. It is, as in these several instances, with respect to the word "heaven : " the difference in every point, between the highest heaven, which is the seat of God's Majesty, and the firmament, which divides the waters from the waters, is much in the same proportion. Whatever relates to God, cannot be adequately described by us. Our means reach it not. We are earthly and temporal ; he is uncreated

and eternal. We are dependent and imperfect; he is omnipotent, and in him is no imperfectness, all being essentially good. We may not scan his ways, nor remove the veil of his Majesty.

To return to the immediate subject, from which, in truth, this can hardly be called a digression—How great wisdom is visible in this order and appointment! how admirable is the plan, as well as the work! how bounteous is the goodness, which both conceived and arranged! “O Lord, my God,” it is the grateful and adoring exclamation of David, “thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Thou coverest thyself with light, as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot.” “What his divine will ordered, his power effected; by that light which sailed about the chaos, and that which was excited within it; whereby such exhalations were raised, as made the firmament: that is, the thicker parts of them made the region of the air, which is the lower firmament; and the thinner parts of them made the æther or higher firmament, wherein the sun and the planets are seated<sup>1</sup>.” Most truly benevolent was this exercise of God’s power. He ordained, that no part of His creation should be without its use; the very exhalations of the earth, he applied to a wise and serviceable purpose; and, by giving them a station and an office, he at the same time preserved his work

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

from what might otherwise have been cumbersome and perilous. "The atmosphere, under the name of the old firmament, divides these mighty masses of water"—the waters above and the waters beneath—"from each other, pursuant to the divine command: From the seas, rivers, lakes, rivulets, and moist earth, it is ever ascending, by evaporation, into the atmosphere, to change again, and to fall down in dews, fogs, and rain. No agents are more active and efficient in transforming water into its vaporous state, than light and heat, and these also are essential parts of the common air, of which our atmosphere is constituted. The atmosphere could not have been made before light had been connected with our globe; and the justness of the position of the formation of the atmosphere after the production of the light, and of the rise of the clouds after both these had appeared, is another instance of the rationality and truth of the Mosaic Cosmogony<sup>1</sup>." The like provision, or careful forethought and contrivance, is manifest throughout all the works of what we commonly term nature, but which is only an appointed order of the Creator, having no power which is not delegated to it by him; whose regularity itself is his command: there is nothing, as we shall hereafter have occasion more particularly to notice, which has not a wise, an useful, and an entirely benevolent intention.

According to our version of the Bible, the crea-

tion of the world was completed in six days, and the first day was devoted to the creation of light, the second to the separation of the waters from the land, the third to the separation of the waters from the land, the fourth to the separation of the waters from the land, the fifth to the separation of the waters from the land, and the sixth to the separation of the waters from the land.

tion of the firmament, and the division of the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, compose the work of one day; the evening and the morning of it being stated to be the second day. An objection has been raised to this order of the historical document; the objector urging, that the work of the second day really comprehended a portion of that which is attributed to the third. This objection is made to rest on two grounds; the first of which is, that the usual closing remark or sentence, that the purpose which had been accomplished, or the matter or being which had been created, was "good," is wanting in this place, and is to be found in the imputed proceeding of the next day, as well as immediately after that portion of the work which would seem more properly to belong to this day's employment, as at the conclusion of the undisputed employment of the third day. It is true, that this sentence is wanting in the former case, and that it does occur, as alleged, in the latter; and, we contend, that, for the twofold mention in the one, and the omission in the other, there is justifying cause. God made the firmament, and divided the waters; but that operation did not complete the work; and, until it was completed, how should it be pronounced to be so? The firmament was in itself completed, but the waters were not gathered together; there was still a visible confusion as regarded them both, and, till they should be properly disposed, it would be inconsistent with the Divine Wisdom and truth to pronounce

them to be "good." It is said of all parts of creation, as they were finished, absolutely finished, and only as they were thus finished, that "God saw that they were good;" when they were brought into their designed state, and applied to their designed purpose, He, as it were, examined into them, to see whether they were accordant with the purpose for which he had designed them; and, seeing them to be so, he declared the fact, or, as it is said, "saw that they were good;" but, how could he have pronounced this or any part "good," before it was in such a state and of such a capacity, that he could examine and see, whether it were adapted to its design? We may hence readily understand the reason for the deferring of the approving sentence. It is the other assumed ground of objection, that the gathering together of the waters into one place appears essentially to belong to the second day's work, as being a portion of the making of the firmament and of the dividing of the waters. This may be a good reason for the deferring of the approving sentence, but it is none for bringing into debate the justness of the order. The work, according to our present received order, of the second day, was of sufficient magnitude, and bore an equal proportion to the work of each other day; and, besides this, the gathering together of the waters into one place was materially connected with the intended properties of the earth; and, therefore, the locating of them and their receptacles, with the fixing of their boundaries, and the endowment of the earth, may with the utmost

propriety be appointed at the same date. On the third day, when the waters were gathered together, and received the appellation of seas, the dry land likewise received that of earth; and they are both included in one sentence of approval; and there is at least as much connection between the appearance of the earth and its endowment, as there is between the division of the waters and the gathering of them together. "In this second day's work, it is not said, as in the rest," observes an old divine<sup>1</sup>, "*God saw that it was good*: because, whereas this day's work was about separation of waters, they were not perfectly and fully parted, till the waters, which covered the earth, were couched in their channels; which was not till the third day: and there it is twice said, that *God saw it was good*; once, for the entire separation of the waters, and again for the fructification of the ground." If the received order be abandoned, it would rather be conceded that an additional day should be required. From this we may learn, and the lesson, or the warning, is of important use, how that, when we permit ourselves to begin to question authority, we are running into the wide and tractless fields of doubt and danger. There seems no just reason for invalidating the present order; no argument of weight can be adduced; and that, on which the change would be founded, is but creative of contradiction and difficulty; and, surely, it is far wiser to leave it as it stands. The whole

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Lightfoot.



objection rests on the merest and most causeless conjecture: it contains no substance; and argument and probability are altogether against it. However, beyond all things else, let us take care, that neither this nor any similar objection lead us into the slightest questioning of the authenticity and correctness of the sacred text. Let us hold it as an incontrovertible position, that there is no undesigned omission in any statement of the inspired writing. Being God's word, it cannot be faulty; and if we will but carefully examine and consider it, we shall find abundant and satisfactory reason for crediting that it is in no particular defective. It may not give us every information we desire; and, when it does not, it does not because it is unfit we should have it. God is a more competent Judge of what is expedient for us, than we are ourselves. What we desire and he withholds, is neither that which would profit us, nor which we could comprehend; and it is, truly, of the nature of man to desire, and to endeavour after the things that he has not, and principally because they are things that he has not. Scripture affords us every information it hath designed or professed to give; and, in its own intention, and the accomplishment of it, there is neither omission, nor error, nor imperfectness of any kind. The fault, when we indulge in any such undue imagination, is always to be imputed to our own negligence, our own deficiency in understanding and penetration. God's Scripture is in no wise to be taxed with inadequateness or folly: if it could be justly so taxed, there would be an end of

its authority. The careful and religious reader will reverently bend to it, and will rather condemn himself as lacking knowledge and judgment, than think lightly of its verity and excellence.

The work of the second day was in this manner concluded. The firmament was made, and the waters were divided; they were divided, above and beneath; the one region was secured against injury from the other, while both were supplied with their proper matter and nutriment. It is for man to adore the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, which contrived and executed so marvellous a scheme; of the God, who in all the design of it looked to the safety, convenience, and general welfare, of the world he had created. The waters above the firmament, and the waters beneath the firmament, he divided, and forbade again to be commingled one with another, and so prevented them from occasioning any confusion in the system. He placed a barrier, by means whereof all hazard would be avoided, while it was so formed and established, that the waters, in regular and sufficient quantities, and likewise at seasonable times, might have their passage for fertilizing of the earth; while, moreover, by the same arrangement, the space above would be relieved from any hurtful excess. That barrier, besides, he made to be useful and agreeable to animal and to vegetable life; ordaining it, also, according to our perception and service, to be the seat of those great bodies which dispense to us a light and warmth; and, by means of all which, in beautiful harmony, giving

such exhalations as are both wholesome to our being and delightful to our sense. Rightly may we say, in the words of the King of Israel, rightly may we confess, and triumphantly proclaim, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

## CHAPTER III.

## GENESIS i. 9—13.

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

It pleased the Creator now to proceed to the regular disposition of the earth and the waters. We are to bear in mind, with respect to this portion of the work, that hitherto the act of creation only had been performed, and that these great component parts of the nether world had not yet been placed in their pre-designed order, or appointed to their intended services. From the whole original mass those separations had been made, from which were produced the air and the light; and the remainder consisted but of water and of earth. These formed one mass; they were mingled together in one confused heap, they were undistinguishable, the one from the other;

that is, there was no particle, however minute, which had not in it somewhat of either; and it was, at this point, necessary that they should be separated, or withdrawn from their primary and essential amalgamation, in order that they might be fitted and commanded to their proper stations and offices: now, therefore, the history tells us that “God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear”—and so it accordingly happened. Each element assumed the situation, and became ready for the duty, to which it was the divine purpose it should be assigned. There is an observation, upon this part of the work, of our commentator <sup>1</sup>, which is too important to be withholden from the present notice and use; and I with the utmost satisfaction adduce it, because it is altogether built on argument of Scripture—the only safe rule by which we can in such matter be guided. “There being such large portions of matter drawn out of the chaos, as made the body of fire and air before-mentioned, there remained in a great body only water and earth; but they so jumbled together, that they could not be distinguished. It was the work, therefore, of the third day to make a separation between them; by compacting together all the particles which make the earth, which was before mud and dirt; and then, by raising it above the waters which covered its superficies, (as the Psalmist also describes this work, Psalm civ. 6.)

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

and lastly, by making such caverns in it, as were sufficient to receive the waters into them. Now this we may conceive to have been done by such particles of fire as were left in the bowels of the earth: whereby such nitro-sulphureous vapours were kindled, as made an earthquake; which both lifted up the earth, and also made receptacles for the water to run into; as the Psalmist (otherwise I would not venture to mention this) seems in the fore-mentioned place to illustrate it, Psalm civ. 7. where he says, *At thy rebuke, they* (i. e. the waters) *fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.* And so God himself speaks, Job xxxviii. 10. *I brake up for it* (i. e. the sea) *my decreed place, and set bars and doors.* Histories also tell us of mountains that have been, in several ages, lifted up by earthquakes; nay, islands in the midst of the sea: which confirms this conjecture, that possibly the waters were, at the first, separated by this means; and so separated, that they should not return to cover the earth. For the word in the beginning of this verse, which we translate *gathered*, comes from a word which signifies a square, a rule, or perpendicular line: and wherefore denotes they were most exactly collected, and so poised in such just proportions, that they should not again overflow the dry land." The entire scriptural passages, on which the commentator grounds himself, are these: First, in the hundred and fourth Psalm—"Thou coveredst the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted

away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys into the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth." Next, in the thirty-eighth chapter of the book of Job—"Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had issued from the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." There is full justification, we see, in the argument. It does not rest on mere conjecture: it is no speculation or supposition: but it accounts, in manner agreeable both to reason and to Scripture, for the appearance of the earth and the waters. It shows to us a process, so regular and perfect in its conception and operation, as now to seem natural; and we cannot bring ourselves to think that the separation could have been effected by other means than those which are here stated. God, by miracle indeed, as all creation was the work of miracle, thus separated the earth and the waters, and then ordained the continuance of the result of that miracle to be to future times a natural cause. "And God," proceeds the sacred historian, "called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas." He called the dry land "earth," a word signifying lowness or depth, in contradistinction to the word "heaven," which signifies height; and

he called the gathering together of the waters "seas," a bed or supply of water. The globe assumed the form and appearance which we at this day see it to have. God brought the elements of earth and water into such character, and rested them on such foundation, that they should not afterwards interfere with the appointment, either of the other. That great mass of water, which is called sea, was fixed by a perpetual ordinance; and all the rivers, and springs, and fountains of waters, were directed to turn themselves into it. "He gathereth the waters of the sea together," saith the Psalmist, "as an heap: he layeth up the depth in store-houses." "All the rivers run into the sea," observes the Preacher; "yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." "He divideth the sea with his power," saith Job. Thus, the waters "were sent down into their proper channels, and the earth made dry, and fitted for the habitation of such creatures, as were afterwards created<sup>1</sup>." It was at this point, "God saw" that this part of his work "was good." The earth and the seas were properly disposed: the work, which had been commenced on the preceding day, was finished; the Creator, therefore, surveyed it, and found it to be according to his design, and no longer delayed to pronounce the sentence of approbation and blessing. It was reduced into shape; it was arranged into its parts, each of which had received its station,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.



and was now settled immoveably in it. The earth was prepared for the appointments for which it was in its natural substance capacitated,—the waters were equally so. God saw that they were in this satisfactory condition; he pronounced that they were: each appeared as an instrument, perfect to its intention, and accordant with the plan of its Framer. He thence immediately set himself, so, respectively, to apply them.

The earth was the main object; the waters were but subordinate to it; and to the earth, consequently, was the first application. The Being in prospect, for the use and enjoyment of whom all had been contrived and called forth, was destined to be an inhabitant of earth,—to be, indeed, bodily formed out of it: it is not without reason, then, that we find the Creator carrying his attention in the first instance unto it. It was the business of this attention to endow the earth with the power or office of production. “And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth.” This was the command: this was what the word of God directed; and obedience was rendered, as in each former case, to the terms of it: “And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed was in itself, after his kind.” In the beginning, as the earth itself was produced out of nothing, so the grass, the herb, and the tree, were created out

of it by the sole word of God: till that word was uttered, or had gone forth, the earth had no faculty; it was dead; no sooner was it uttered, than it became essentially possessed of life, and, with life, of the property of productiveness; and, the produce itself, when thus created, was endued with the power of perpetual propagation. In the first instance, they arose, or sprang, to the perfection of their nature, without passing through those previous, and, from that time unto the end of the world, necessarily gradual processes,—necessary, as well to their continued existence, as to their growth and maturity—the grass, the herb, and the tree; under which three heads may be comprehended whatever there is of vegetable life. These were produced at once, complete in their kind, containing in themselves the principles of their perpetuity—their seeds. The earth was suddenly clothed with them: it had not merely the faculty of producing them, but *it did, on that instant, produce them*. If it had not immediately produced them, and in their perfect state, the sentence of approbation could not have passed; because, unless they had stood forth to the Divine Presence in the perfection of their nature, in the fullest capacity and height to which they were capable of attaining, God could not have seen that they were “good,” or perfect; they would, on the contrary, have been imperfect, as not being complete; and he might as truly have pronounced all to be good, prospectively, on the first day of creation, as that to be good, the seed or source only of which had yet been called

into being; we are, therefore, obliged, as we assent to the verity of the Scripture account, to believe that all these stood before him in entire growth and maturity. They were produced, the grass, the herb, and the tree, containing, each one, according to and in its kind, the principle of perpetuity, the seed; not the principle first, and the fruit of it to be shown and proved afterwards; not in such manner, I repeat, but the matured substance; demonstrating, that, as the Almighty Creator could produce the substance before the seed, so likewise, although the substance was made to contain the seed, the productive faculty of the seed must, notwithstanding, be still dependent on his will and permission. It is remarkable, that this creation and maturity were accomplished before the application of the principle of heat which is contained in the influence of the sun, without which nothing has since been brought to the fulness of its natural qualities. How confounding is this fact to the philosopher of the world, who would contend for the exclusive omnipotence, or essential and absolute independence of nature—as though nature were its own deity<sup>1</sup>! All these things

<sup>1</sup> Since neither all things are produced fortuitously, or by the unguided mechanism of matter, nor God himself may reasonably be thought to do all things immediately and miraculously, it may well be concluded, that there is a plastic nature under Him, which, as an inferior and subordinate instrument, doth drudgingly execute that part of His Providence, which consists in the regular and orderly motion of matter; yet so as that there is also, besides this, a single Providence to be acknowledged, which, presiding over it, doth often supply the deficiency of it,

were created, and appeared in dutiful homage before their Creator, in their highest glory and truest perfectness, ere the sun had been appointed to its office, or the seasons had received directions for their course. How forcibly does this speak to us of the subordinate capacity and agency of the most magnificent bodies and appearances, whether in heaven or in earth ! of every operation of nature ! of the course even of time itself ! That which now requires the united care of man and nature ; which will fail of its effect, if any of the means which God has ordained shall be neglected ; all owes its origin to what was created before any thing but the earth, the producing body, was existent, to operate upon or to influence it, as preparatory to its being brought forth ! Let those, who would assert the necessary faculties of nature, think hereupon, and adore the God, who could produce by a word, while as yet there was neither the heat of the sun to vivify, nor the alternation of the

and sometimes overrule it ; forasmuch as this plastic matter cannot act electively, nor with discretion. And by this means the wisdom of God will not be shut up nor concluded wholly within his own breast, but will display itself abroad, and print its stamps and signatures every where throughout the world ; so that God, as Plato (after Orpheus) speaks, will be not only the beginning and end, but also the middle of all things ; they being as much to be ascribed to his causality, as if himself had done them all immediately without the concurrent instrumentality of any subordinate natural cause. Notwithstanding which, in this way it will appear also to human reason, that all things are ordered and disposed by the Deity without any solicitous care, or distractive Providence.—CUDWORTH.

seasons to strengthen, nor the course of time to mature—while there was none of this now established and necessary order,—every thing in its best power and growth<sup>1</sup>! After the doing of this, after

<sup>1</sup> Moses, in describing the work of creation, attributeth speech unto God: *God said, let there be light: let there be a firmament: let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place: let the earth bring forth: let there be light in the firmament of heaven.* Was this only the intent of Moses, to signify the infinite greatness of God's power, by the easiness of his accomplishing such effects, without travel, pain, or labour? Surely, it seemeth that Moses had herein, besides this, a further purpose, namely, first, to teach that God did not work as a necessary, but a voluntary agent, intending beforehand, and decreeing with himself, that which did outwardly proceed from him. Secondly, to show that God did then institute a law natural to be observed by creatures; and therefore, according to the manner of laws, the institution thereof is described, as being established by solemn injunction. His commanding those things to be which are, and to be in such sort as they are, to keep that tenure and course which they do, importeth the establishment of nature's law. The world's first creation, and the preservation since of things created, what is it, but only so far forth a manifestation by execution, what the eternal law of God is concerning things natural? And as it cometh to pass in a kingdom rightly ordered, that after a law is once published, it presently takes effect far and wide, all states framing themselves thereunto; even so let us think it fareth in the natural course of the world: since the time that God did first proclaim the edicts of his law upon it, heaven and earth have hearkened unto his voice, and their labour hath been to do his will: *he made a law for the rain; he gave his decree unto the sea, that the waters should not pass his commandment.* Now, if nature should intermit her course, and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws; if those principal and mother elements of the world

that he had so asserted his own supremacy, he summoned those principles and bodies into substance

whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which now they have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motion, and by irregular volubility turn themselves any way as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should, as it were, through a languishing faintness, begin to stand, and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way, the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by disordered and confused mixture, the winds breathe out their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away, as children at the breasts of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief; what would become of man himself, whom all these things do now serve? See we not, plainly, that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world? Notwithstanding, with nature it cometh sometimes to pass as with art. Let Phidias have rude and obstinate stuff to carve, though his art do that it should, his work will lack that beauty which otherwise in fitter matter it might have had. He that striketh an instrument with skill, may cause, notwithstanding, a very unpleasant sound, if the string whereon he striketh chance to be uncapable of harmony. In the matter whereof things natural consist, that of Theophrastus takes place, Πολὺ τὸ οὐχ ὑπακούον οὐδὲ δεχόμενον τὸ εἶ. *Much of it is oftentimes such, as will by no means yield to receive that impression which were best and most perfect.* Which defect in the matter of things natural, they who gave themselves unto the contemplation of nature amongst the heathen, observed often: but the true original cause thereof, divine malediction, laid for the sin of man upon these creatures, which God had made for the use of man, this being an article of that saving truth which God hath revealed unto his Church, was above the

and shape, on which, in thenceforward times, these creations should, under Himself, be made to depend.

reach of their merely natural capacity and understanding. But howsoever, these swervings are now and then incident into the course of nature ; nevertheless, so constantly the laws of nature are by natural agents observed, that no man denieth, but those things which nature worketh are wrought either always, or for the most part, after one and the same manner. If here it be demanded, what this is which keepeth nature in obedience to her own law, we must have recourse to that higher law, whereof we have already spoken ; and because all other laws do thereon depend, from thence we must borrow so much as shall need for brief resolution in this point. Although we are not of opinion, therefore, as some are, that nature in working hath before her certain exemplary draughts or patterns, which subsisting in the bosom of the Highest, and being thence discovered, she fixeth her eye upon them, as travellers by sea upon the pole star of the world, and that according thereunto she guideth her hand to work by imitation : although we rather embrace the oracle of Hippocrates, *That each thing, both in small and great, fulfilleth the task which destiny hath set down.* And concerning the manner of executing and fulfilling the same, *What they do they know not, yet is it in show and appearance as though they did know what they do ; and the truth is, they do not discern the things which they look on :* nevertheless, forasmuch as the works of nature are no less exact, than if she did both behold and study how to express some absolute shape or mirror always present before her, yea, such her dexterity and skill appeareth, that no intellectual creature in the world were able by capacity to do that which nature doth without capacity and knowledge ; it cannot be, but nature hath some director of infinite knowledge to guide her in all her ways. Who is the guide of nature, but only the God of Nature ? *In him we live, move, and are.* Those things which nature is said to do, are by divine art performed, using nature as an instrument ; nor is there any

How forcibly, I again say, is the omnipotence of God manifested to us! He, at his own word, by his

such art or knowledge divine in nature herself working, but in the guide of nature's work. Whereas, therefore, things natural, which are not in the number of voluntary agents, (for of such only we now speak, and of no other,) do so necessarily observe their certain laws, that as long as they keep those forms which give them their being, they cannot possibly be apt or inclinable to do otherwise than they do; seeing the kinds of their operations are both constantly and exactly framed, according to the several ends for which they serve, they themselves in the meanwhile, though doing that which is fit, yet knowing neither what they do, nor why; it followeth, that all which they do in this sort, proceedeth originally from some such agent as knoweth, appointeth, holdeth up, and even actually frameth the same. The manner of this divine efficiency being far above us, we are no more able to conceive by our reason, than creatures unreasonable by their sense are able to apprehend after what manner we dispose and order the course of our affairs. Only thus much is discerned, that the natural generation and process of all things receiveth order of proceeding from the settled stability of divine understanding. This appointeth unto them their kinds of working; the disposition whereof, in the purity of God's own knowledge and will, is rightly termed by the name of Providence. The same being referred unto the things themselves, here disposed by it, was wont by the ancients to be called natural destiny. That law, the performance whereof we behold in things natural, is as it were an authentical, or an original draught, written in the bosom of God himself; whose Spirit being to execute the same, useth every particular nature, every mere natural agent, only as an instrument created at the beginning, and ever since the beginning used to work his own will and pleasure withal. Nature, therefore, is nothing else but God's instrument. In the course whereof, Dionysius, perceiving some sudden disturbance, is said to have cried out, *Aut Deus naturæ*



own command and authority, and without intermediate agency, made them all to be! He needed no principle of seed from which to produce; he required not that seed should be sown, that time should develop in the earth; that the seasons should conduct in gradual process; that the rain should contribute moisture, or assist to fulness; that the sun should dispense its heat; or that the gales of heaven should give, as it were, breath and life; he did then, as he could also do now, if it pleased him, order all on the instant into being and perfectness; and, when he had done so, he created instruments and agents for their future maintenance and support. This dealing was very consistent with the purposes and proceedings of an Almighty Creator: he exer-

*patitur, aut mundi machina dissolvitur*; either God doth suffer impediment, and is by a greater than himself hindered; or, if that be impossible, then hath he determined to make a present dissolution of the world; the execution of that law beginning now to stand still, without which the world cannot stand. This workman, whose servitor nature is, being in truth but only one, the heathens imagining to be more, gave him in the sky the name of Jupiter; in the air, the name of Juno; in the water, the name of Neptune; in the earth, the name of Vesta, and sometimes of Ceres; the name of Apollo in the sun; in the moon, the name of Diana; the name of Æolus, and divers others, in the winds; and, to conclude, even so many guides of nature they dreamed of, as they saw there were kinds of things natural in the world. These they honoured, as having power to work or cease accordingly as men deserved of them: but unto us there is one only guide of all agents natural, and He both the creator and worker of all in all, alone to be blessed, adored, and honoured by all for ever.—HOOKER.

cised his power in creation, the highest act in which it could be exercised, and left the further charge—in submission, be it remembered, to his own will, as it ever must be—to subordinate agents. It would hardly have become the Divine Majesty to be seen at all times, and on all occasions, using a personal interference: he made his appointments; he formed and established his laws; and, in true sovereign manner, left them to work, according to the scheme he had enacted, as if, indeed of themselves,—because, by properties bestowed upon them by him,—yet in strictest obedience to the directions of his will, and in complete consequence of it. May we not see, that the wise legislator, when he has proposed his institutes and laws, leaves them to their proper working, and ceases that attention to minute matters, which in the progress of his framing of them, while they were but on the way to the standard of their appointment, he had found to be requisite? that, however he may be at hand, ready to prevent any perversion of their design, or interruption of their action, he deems it to be totally inconsistent with his own character, and their free and intended operation, to be ever employed in personal interference regarding them? May we not see, that the wise workman acts by the same rule, and with the same method, as concerning the machinery he has prepared and set up? that, having formed its several parts, and fitted them together; having constructed it into a whole, he leaves it to its appointed duty and delegated powers, however the wisdom of his

own understanding, the care of his own forethought, and the skilfulness of his own hand, may be always near, to rectify any disorder to which it may be liable, and to regulate its motions, when they should be at all in hazard of deviation or mischance? to renew what should be decaying, and to direct what should be failing? So, with respect to the Almighty: He set up his ordinances; he had confidence in the capabilities which he had distributed to them; he saw that they were good,—that they were competent and sufficient; and, his visible interference was to a certain extent withdrawn. Now, it might with equal correctness be said, that the machine of human device and construction, when once it has been framed and put to its use, acts by its own necessary properties, as that nature acts by *its* necessary properties: the former assertion, if it were made, would not be more encompassed with absurdity than the latter. The machine possesses its properties, because they have been given to it; it exercises them, because such has been the appointment of its framer and designer; and, although it is left to its own working, it is only in compliance with the provision of that appointment; and, it is still subject to control. Nature is likewise as a machine, designed and framed by God; and has power, only because power has been given to it by him. It is not independent; and it can move but as he has directed, and as he permits. If it were independent, its properties would be changeable; the very regularity, therefore, on which the argument of its

independence is built, is an argument against it, for, commonly, it cannot quit the circle in which it is placed. When God had ordained the seed as the perpetuating principle, and appointed the seasons, with his other agents or instruments, it was no longer necessary that he should *specially* command the springing and the growth. They were, by these very appointments, under the influence of his command; and *they* would remain, until they should be recalled by himself; until the authority he had delegated should be revoked. He had spoken: it was not necessary to renew his word; *it* was that which would endure for ever.

It has been said, as noticed by our Commentator <sup>1</sup>, “that the production of plants in the beginning, differed from their production ever since, in these two things: first, that they have sprung ever since out of seed, either sown by us, or falling from the plants themselves; but at the beginning were brought out of the earth, with their seed in them, to propagate them ever after. Secondly, they need now, as they have done since their first creation, the influence of the sun to make them sprout. But they came forth by the power of God, before there was any sun, which was not formed till the next day.” It is clear, that these things must have had a beginning, as that the world itself had a beginning; and, if we believe that God made the world, there can be no reason why we should doubt his having made *these*. The

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

creation of the world out of nothing was a more wonderful instance of power, than his creation of these things out of that which was already made. Having created the world out of nothing, he had proved his omnipotence; and, being thus confessed omnipotent, nothing that he afterwards did (I speak in respect of himself) is wonderful. The very nature of the things now occupying our notice—the grass, and the herb, and the tree—shows the origin of them to have been of the earth; for, an analysis into their various parts evidences a compound matter: the same may be affirmed of the earth; it is compound; neither is there in any herb or plant—in whatever springs from the ground—any substance which is not to be found in the earth. This is sufficient to demonstrate that they were originally called out of the earth, as the Scripture informs us; but, before they could have appeared from the earth, the earth must have had power to produce them. It is no argument against our position, that their growth in the earth causes this appearance, or forms this composition: if they were not earthy, they could not grow in the earth. The earth, being a created substance, could not have obtained or assumed this power of its own means or will. We are, therefore, per force carried back to the First Cause—to God, who commanded it so to be; by whose “word it was framed;” by whom “things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” He commanded the plant to arise from the ground, with the seed, which was to perpetuate its kind, in itself:

this was now its essential property<sup>1</sup>. He had assigned to it the power of propagation, and that power it was ever after to use, except on those extraordinary occasions in which it should suit his will and wisdom that it should be stayed. "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth." The earth is endowed, conditionally,—a fact we are not to lose sight of,—with this power; if we sow the seed, the plant will spring up; if we tend it, it will grow and mature. This was all which could have been required: this was all which ought to have been expected.

At the same time, knowing, that although all is thus fixed by certain, and but in so far as the prerogative of Omnipotence is concerned, immutable laws, it is, nevertheless, under the care and in subjection

<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge, that God and Nature do things every where, in the most frugal and compendious way, and with the least operoseness; and therefore that the mechanic powers are not rejected, but taken in, so far as they could comply serviceably with the intellectual mould and platform; but still so, as that all is supervised by one understanding and intending cause, and nothing passes without his approbation, who, when either those mechanic powers fall short, or the stubborn necessity of matter proves uncompliant, does over-rule the same, and supply the defects thereof by that which is vital; and that without setting his own hands to every work too, there being a subservient minister under him, which, as an Archeus of the whole world, governs the fluctuating mechanism thereof, and does all things faithfully, for ends and purposes intended by its director.—CUM-  
WQAZH.

to the control of a wise and gracious governor, we feel assured, that, however untoward to mortal perception things may sometimes appear; if there be unusual drought, or unusual rain; if the earth seem to refuse, or to be incapable of performing, its office, and give us not its fruit at our seeking,—that Almighty power, which in the beginning created, can again so influence it as to make it answer our most earnest wishes and strongest necessities. His word can never lose its omnipotence. It can preserve what it created, and change its instruments or means, for trial of our faith, or other purpose of wisdom, as it may, it will be effectual to the accomplishment of whatever it commands. It is that, which cannot in any circumstance fail: it is sure, and it is true. We may be satisfied that our care, being in consistency with the ordained will of God, will not be exercised in vain: he will eventually bless it, and give us that which is good, making his every dispensation to turn to our profit; he will not suffer his own purposes,—and, while we obey his will, our well-being is comprised within his purposes—to be rendered void. We know that he has ordained the seasons and all else for our service; and, therefore, provided we fittingly depend on his goodness, he will command their working to be promotive of our real welfare and most lasting comfort.

Thus was the work of the third day brought to its completion. The waters were gathered together into one place, and the dry land was made to appear: the earth was shaped and arranged, and the sea was

fixed, and had its limits prescribed: to the earth was granted the principle of productiveness; and every plant, and herb, and grass, which now grow upon it, then had their origin. Nothing in this kind has since originated. The skill and labour of man may have multiplied species by compositions, but there is none at present in being which is not determinable in that original principle. All this did God on the third day perform; and he saw "that it was good." The work was perfect; no principle could be added to any part of it; for, if any principle could thereafter have been added, then must there have been an original defectiveness; it could not have been "good;" and God having pronounced it to be "good," His omnipotence would be brought into dispute. As, however, we admit, primarily, His omnipotence, we draw a high value from the delivery of this sentence: we fix every principle to this date; we fix it at the essential creation of the world, and all that it contains. Whatever has sprung since, is rather to be considered as a re-production, than as creation;—for, the being of every thing, remote as it may be in its visible, substantive form, actually holds its date from the date of the principle to which it owes its production. With the creation of the principle, the uses were likewise appointed; and although man might have been ignorant of many of them, as of the properties of the thing or substance, yet did the Almighty Creator in the beginning create them each with its respective use,—with its respective design. There is nothing, minute and insignificant as it may seem,



which did not receive his observation : there is nothing, in its form or capacity, which he did not purposely contrive : there is nothing which he did not fashion. It may be said of all other created objects, as David said of himself, " they are fearfully and wonderfully made ; marvellous are God's works ; their substance was not hid from him, when they were made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth. His eyes did see their substance, yet being imperfect, and in his book all their members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." There is nothing of all his works, which had not designedly in it, power, and wisdom, and goodness. He made not any thing for nought ; and there is not any thing which is made, which was not made by Him.

It is for us to acknowledge and adore this might, and this goodness ; to seek, not elsewhere, but in Himself, for the origin of all things ; to confess that he is their Lord ; that he is their great cause ; and, notwithstanding that we now see them to be governed by established rules and laws, notwithstanding that the sea has its bounds which it cannot pass, and that the round world is so fast that it cannot be moved,—cannot be lifted from its balance, " hang " though it does " upon nothing ; " notwithstanding that the productions of the ground, the grass, the herb, and the tree, spring up naturally, and in order,—so naturally and in such order, as almost to appear to spring by inherent necessity, and that, because we sow and plant, they must grow,—that they obey the influence

of the rain, and the sun, and the seasons,—still, let us remember, that it was God who set its bounds to the sea, and who fixed the world in its present security; that the productions of the earth were in full vigour, maturity, and completeness of kind, before there was either rain, or sun, or season; that their laws, and the rain, and the sun, and the seasons, were of his creation and appointment, and are under his direction and control; that they are but intermediate instruments, and may be changed at his pleasure, and on his word. Let us with devoted humility bend before this God, being grateful to him for all that he has given us, and piously endeavouring to apply them to the use he has intended. Let us never, in the pride, and vanity, and folly of our hearts, cast off our dependence upon him, or, more properly to speak, disavow it, for, cast it off, in reality, we cannot, since we cannot escape his Omnipotence. Let us never ascribe origination to secondary causes, but confess it to be of his will, and his power, and his goodness, that “all things were and are created.” Let God be seen in all; he is, indeed, in them; if he were to withdraw his influence, they would perish; and, they do exist, because he wills them to exist. Let us exclaim with the grateful Psalmist—“The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.”

## CHAPTER IV.

## GENESIS i. 14—19.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

WE now come to the creation of those great and glorious bodies in the heavens, which are called the sun, the moon, and the stars: Lights are they described by Moses to be in the firmament of the heaven; and a part of their office is the division of the day from the night. In the third verse of this chapter, when commanding the work of the first day, "God said, Let there be light:" here he says, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven." The word, which, in the former case, means to signify "light" as an original principle in its kind, has not so extensive a signification in the latter; here it

means only to denote what was created from light; and we are, consequently, to understand, that God having, on the first day of creation, produced by his almighty word the principle of light, and it having until now been distributed, generally, throughout the earth, in order that it might be made instrumental in the arrangements which had been decreed, and in the productions which had been called forth, from it at this time were formed those bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars, which were immediately placed in the firmament of the heaven, that is, the upper region, commonly denominated the sky. They were thus placed for the perpetual use of the world, according to the appointment declared<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> By the most wise and unchanged order, which God observed in the works of the world, I gather, that the light, in the first day created, was the substance of the sunne: for Moses repeateth twice the maine parts of the Universall; first, as they were created in matter; secondly, as they were adorned with forme: first, naming the heavens, the earth, and the waters; all confused; and afterward, the waters congregated, the earth made drie land, and the heavens distinguished from both, and beautified. And, therefore the earth, as it was earth, before it was uncovered, and before it was called arida, or drie land; and the waters were waters, before they were congregated, and called the sea, though neither of them perfect, or enriched with their vertuall formes: so the sunne, although it had not his formal perfection, his circle, beauty, and bounded magnitude, till the fourth day, yet was the substance thereof, in the first day, under the name of light, created; and this light formerly dispersed, was in the same fourth day united, and set in the firmament of heaven\*: for, to light

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\* See page 61, line 10.

It is not within the compass, or consistent with the plan, of this undertaking, to enter at any length into the nature and appearance of these wondrous orbs: the main object is to set forth or exhibit, so far as the permission of God has enabled, the act of creation; to declare the author of it; to manifest its performances, and glories, on scriptural grounds; and to lead men, in all they see and feel, to recognise God, the mighty and benevolent Creator, Preserver, and Governor. This is the object; and not to indulge in any speculation which Scripture does not authorize, not to attempt any field of inquiry, except in such case as may assist to confirmation of the statements which the inspired writer has given. God, we are told, made two great lights; the greater light, which

created in the first day, God gave no proper place or fixation; and therefore the effects named by anticipation (which was to separate day from night) were precisely performed, after this light was congregated, and had obtained life and motion. Neither did the wisdom of God cause why it should move (by which motion, dayes and nights are distinguished) till then; because there was not yet any creature, to which, by moving, the sunne might give light, heat, and operation. But, after the earth (distinguished from the waters) began to bud forth the bud of the herbe, &c. God caused the sunne to move, and (by interchange of time) to visit every part of the inferior world; by his heate to stir up the fire of generation, and to give activity to the seeds of all natures: for, as a king, which commandeth some goodly building to be erected, doth accommodate the same to that use and end, to which it was ordained; so it pleased God (saith Procopius) to command the light to bee; which by his all-powerful word he approved, and, approving it, disposed thereof, to the use and comfort of his future creatures.—RALEIGH.

is the sun, to rule the day; and the lesser light, which is the moon, to rule the night; he made, it is added, the stars also, whose splendour is likewise poured out in the night<sup>1</sup>. These lights, as has been noticed, or the light which is dispensed from or through them, were produced from that general principle of light, which was called into being on the first day of creation, after the same manner in which the various other parts of the world were produced from the general mass, then created. I do not say that the whole principle of light was involved in or given to the dispensation of these bodies; but, only that, in their capacity of lights, they were formed from it as their originating substance. God, in the first instance, commanded the light to be; he produced it from the mass,

<sup>1</sup> ————— Of celestial bodies first the sun  
 A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,  
 Though of ethereal mold: then form'd the moon  
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,  
 And sow'd with stars the heav'n thick as a field:  
 Of light by far the greater part he took  
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd  
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive  
 And drink the liquid light, firm to retain  
 Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.  
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,  
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;  
 By tincture or reflection they augment  
 Their small peculiar, though from human sight  
 So far remote, with diminution seen.

or chaos; and he now, from this general product, formed these particular lights. That the whole principle of light was not absorbed, is evident from the fact that no substance is without heat; if any were without it, it could not be acted upon by it; it is not, therefore, said that the sun, and the moon, and the stars, are the exclusive holders of the means of light, although they are the so great dispensers of it; but, that they govern the day and the night—that they give light from themselves, and regulate that light which is still generally distributed, which gave the first light to the world, and was the origin of day.

The first office of these lights was, as we learn, to divide the day from the night. The division of the light from the darkness, and the ordaining of the respective courses of day and of night, were of the work of the first day; but, here these lights are said to be appointed to divide the day from the night. The principle of light, and the condition of darkness, were the first ordinance of God; or, rather, the principle of light was his first ordinance, all having been hitherto essentially dark; and, on the instant that light was created, it was divided from the darkness; that is, while the one part of the globe was under the influence of darkness, the other was under the influence of light. There were then, indeed, night and day, or evening and morning, as space of time; but, nothing to distinguish them; and these bodies were now ordained with these capacities, and for these purposes: they were to divide the day

from the night,—the light had already been divided from the darkness; and this division was to be effected by the motion of the earth in relation to these bodies; when that motion should carry it to the presence of the sun, it would be day; when it should carry it from the presence of the sun, it would be night; wherefore, the sun divided the day from the night, and so ruled over the day. The moon and stars ruled over the night, because they shone, or penetrated by their brilliancy through the darkness, and prevented the earth from being overwhelmed by it. They were “for signs and for seasons;” by their appearance and influence they were made to cause or direct, subserviently to their Creator, the seasons of spring, of summer, of autumn, and of winter; to do thus, by their nearer approach, or their further distance; and they are in such respect signs to us of the seasons, and instructions in the occupations of life; marking the fit time for the several duties which are dependent on those several seasons. They are “for days and years;” by the same kind of division, which their swifter or slower motion effects in the course of time. The swifter motion makes the day—the four-and-twenty hours,—that day which is made up of light and of darkness, of day and of night: the slower motion makes the year<sup>1</sup>. It is by

<sup>1</sup> The primitive sacred year originally consisted of twelve months of thirty days each, or 360 days. This was in use before the deluge: as appears from Noah's reckoning five months, or 150 days, from the seventeenth day of the second month, to the



this regularity of motion that all parts of the earth are visited in due order by the cheering and invigo-

seventeenth day of the seventh month, as expressing the time of the rising of the waters; and seven months and ten days more, till the waters were dried up, and Noah and his family left the ark, after a residence therein of 370 days, or a year and ten days, till the seven and twentieth day of the second month of the ensuing year. (Genesis vii. and viii.) This was also the original Chaldean year; for Berosus, in his History of the Antediluvian kings of Babylonia, counted their reigns by Sari, or decads of years; and a Sarus, as Alexander Polyhister related, (Apud Syncell. p. 32,) was 3,600 days, or ten years, consisting each of 360 days. After the deluge, this primitive year was handed down by Noah and his descendants to the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Indians, and Chinese; as is evident from the testimonies of the best and most ancient writers and historians.—DR. HALES.

The month is a measure of time originally derived from the *moon*, in almost every nation and language. Among the Hebrews, *Jarah* signified both the *moon* at full, and the *month*; compare Job xxxi. 26. with xxix. 2. *Hhadash*, the *moon* at new, and the *month*; compare Numb. x. 10; Psalm lxxxi. 3. with 1 Sam. xx. 5; Ezekiel xlvi. 1; Numb. xxviii. 11, &c. Among the Greeks, *μην*, the *month*, is evidently related to *μηνη*, the *moon*: and from *μηνις*, according to Varro and Macrobius, was derived the Latin *mensis*, or month. In like manner, the Saxon *monat*, and our *month*, are evidently derived from the moon. The civil, or calendar month, originally consisted of thirty days; in which time a lunation was supposed to be finished. Thus, during the deluge, Noah counted five months equivalent to 150 days, at thirty days to one month. And such was its fixed length among the Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, and Grecians. Afterwards, it was found by more accurate observations, that the length of a lunation was only twenty-nine days and a half. When the thirtieth day, which Hesiod called “old,” was named by Solon “old and

rating beams of the sun,—are made partakers of its grateful influence, both of light and heat. These bodies are, all of them, “for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth,” dispensing, with light, other genial and wholesome influence. “In them,” that is, “the heavens,” hath “he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

These lights are termed the greater light, the lesser light, and the stars. The greater light, which, as we have seen, is the sun, governs the day: it enlightens, and it invigorates. The sun is the greater light: the magnitude of this body is immense: many conjectures have been formed as to its actual size; but, it is utterly impossible that correctness should rest in any of them; yet, we may have some conception of the wonderfulness of it, some idea of the power of Him who produced it, when we learn that its diameter has been estimated at upwards of eight hundred thousand miles. That which is termed the lesser light, the moon, gives too a certain quantity of light, and what is sufficient, in necessary degree, to dissipate the extreme darkness of night. It is placed next in order to the sun, in the enumeration,

new;” one half of it appertaining to the old month, the other half to the new; and to avoid the fraction, they counted the moiety alternately, twenty-nine and thirty days.—Id.

not because it is the next in magnitude, for, of the planets it is one of the smallest, but, because, in the absence of the sun, or more properly to speak, as the earth turns round the sun, and the sun is stationary, when the earth is at its greater distance from the sun it reflects its beams, so giving us, though a borrowed light, as in reality it is, a greater light than we derive from any other of the heavenly bodies, with the exception of the sun: it is, therefore, very truly said to govern the night; for, without it, the night would be one continued and impenetrable darkness. "Of the actual substance of the sun, so little satisfactory yet to our judgment has been discovered, that all which is mentioned concerning it, can rank no higher than to conjectures of scientific imagination more or less plausible. The comparative masses of its spacious substance, and of the other planets, have been calculated. Dr. Herschel thought its body to be opaque, with an upper stratum of self-luminous clouds. Black spots of varying magnitude and form are continually appearing upon it, and receding; and have led astronomers to discover that the sun has a rotation round its own axis, which it performs in about twenty-five days and a half. These spots are almost always comprised in a particular zone of its surface. His diameter has been estimated to 886,149 miles. From the faint zodaical light, which at times accompanies it, an atmosphere has been ascribed to it, but so thin that stars are visible through it. The variety of seasons which it was appointed to produce, is caused by the inclination of the ecliptic to the

equator. The substance of the moon is more known to us than that of the brighter luminary. Its volume is forty-nine times less than the volume of the earth. There is ground for supposing that all is solid at its surface, for it appears, in powerful telescopes, as an arid mass, on which some have thought they could perceive the effects, and even the explosions of volcanoes. There are mountains, which rise to the height of nearly two miles; and it has been inferred that it has deep cavities, like the basins of our seas. Caspian lakes have been supposed in it. But it has either no atmosphere, or it is of such extreme rarity, as to exceed the nearest vacuum we can produce by our best constructed air pumps; so that no terrestrial animal could breathe alive upon its surface. It has a great number of invariable spots, which prove that the moon always presents to us the same hemisphere, and revolves on its axis in a period equal to that of its revolution round the earth. Its dark and bright parts have given rise to the idea, that it has seas, islands, and continents; but it is now doubted whether it has any water at all; and it has been supposed that if it had any oceans, the superior attraction of the earth, especially when in conjunction with the sun, would draw the aqueous fluid into a deluge over a large part of its surface. The light of the full moon is at least 300,000 times more feeble than that of the sun. From this inferiority, the lunar rays, when collected in the most powerful mirrors, produce no sensible effect on the thermometer. Indeed they seem to have a cold-producing agency,

according to the experience of practical men, though philosophers have not yet ascertained the fact by their direct experiments<sup>1</sup>." The stars God likewise made. These comprise the rest of the heavenly bodies; which, although in appearance to us less glorious and important, are yet of high benefit. They give or reflect light; their beneficial influence is largely experienced by the earth; and they greatly serve to the division of times and of seasons. They are marvellous bodies; they are vast in size; countless in number; and almost infinite in distance. From the little which human industry and skill have been hitherto able to discover as regarding them, we know enough to strike us with astonishment and awe. Their "primitive fluidity is clearly indicated by the compression of their figure, conformably to the laws of the mutual attraction of the molecules. It is also demonstrated by the regular diminution of gravity, as we proceed from the equator to the poles. This state of primitive fluidity, to which we are conducted by astronomical phenomena, is also apparent from those which natural history points out. Such is the deliberate judgment of La Place. Sir Isaac Newton had also, a century before, asserted the primeval fluidity of our globe. It is thus that Moses first displays it to our view, a moving, liquid, unformed mass. In this state, under the additional action of light, it began its wonderful rotation, and became the regular composition of which it now consists.

<sup>1</sup> Turner's Sacred History.

One of the grandest circumstances to which the contemplation of the heavenly bodies that form our system attaches the attention, is the surprising distances at which they are placed, and the stupendous amount of space which they occupy by their circuits. Our earth is above ninety millions of miles from the sun; Saturn is above eight hundred and more millions further off; and the next and most remote that we know, which is connected with us, the Uranus, is twice that mighty distance. The fact is sublime and vast, beyond the power of our words to express, or of our ideas to conceive. This last planet of our system rolls in an elliptical orbit, almost circular, of which 1788 millions of miles are the diameter, and therefore circumscribes an area of 5000 millions of miles. Our system occupies this amazing portion of space; and yet, is but one small compartment of the indescribable universe. Immense as is an area of 5000 millions of miles, yet it is but a very little section of the incomprehensible whole. Above 100,000 stars, apparently suns like ours, shine above us; and to each of these, that analogy would lead us to assign a similar appropriation of space; but of such a marvellous expansion of extent and being, although visibly real, from the existence of the lucid orbs that testify its certainty to us, the mind, with all its efforts, can form no distinct idea. Thought lapses into nothingness, whenever it attempts to do so; and yet, astonishing as this is, it becomes more wonderful, from the fact that the distance is so immense from us, before those other myriads begin, that no fixed star can be made to give

a parallax by the most powerful instruments. The remoteness, therefore, of the nearest beyond the orbit of Uranus, must be, what from the poverty of earthly language we must be content to call immeasurable. This is indeed a marvellous mystery. It compels us to call creation an infinite immensity. It aggrandizes the Creator into a sublimity, that would render it the most presumptuous folly for us to imagine that He could think of, or care for us, if He had not expressly revealed to us his condescending regard, and his invitation and command, that we should attach ourselves to Him. But this awful greatness, makes that revelation the more inestimable to us; for, without such a charter, without such personal authorization for our affectionate adoration and grateful duty, what could our reason suggest to us, while it contemplated a majesty so tremendous, but a tremulous dread, and silent despair<sup>1</sup>?"

All these bodies God now formed and fashioned. They are, truly, marvellous works; and, it is no small advantage to us, that we are infallibly assured of their origin and their Creator. We see, that, like unto ourselves, they are created beings; that they have nothing which they have not received; that they were called into light and warmth by the same Lord that called us into existence; that they are servants, and not masters; that they are subordinate instruments of a mighty and beneficent God, who is the cause of all, who is in all, and who is above all.

<sup>1</sup> Turner's Sacred History.

Without this certain information, men are very liable to run into dangerous and sinful errors. We know, that, where a right notion of their origin has not prevailed, men have been deceived into giving them a character and ascribing to them a capacity which cannot be theirs ; in considering them to be deities, and offering them worship as such ; a practice which must be offensive to Him that formed them, “ who knoweth whereof they are made,” and who not only views them now in their full usefulness and glory, but who is by His eternity able to look back on them in their primal matter,—to look even beyond that, into their original nothingness. This practice is offensive to Him, and men have been oftentimes warned against it in the clearest and strongest terms. It has been condemned as a sin, both in the adoring of that which cannot receive adoration, and in the supposing of similitude in him who hath neither parts nor passions. We find, in the holy Scriptures, repeated injunctions on this subject: we are constantly instructed and admonished of the real case, “ lest we lift up our eyes unto heaven, and whenever we see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, should be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord our God hath divided unto all nations under heaven.” They are divided, or distributed unto all nations ; all nations are made partakers of the effects of their influence ; but, they are not causes in themselves ; glorious, magnificent, and even in a high degree incomprehensible by us, as they are, they are the work of another—of God ; He is their



**Master ; they can do but what He directs them to do. They cannot move from the station to which He hath appointed them. They must obey the laws which He hath set them. David speaks of the "heavens," as "the work of his fingers," and "the moon and the stars" as those which He hath "ordained,"—and he says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." They are, in truth, but great bodies, formed by Him, placed by Him in the upper firmament, and so constituted and disposed as to send light, and other their proper influences, throughout the world. They are the agents of a bounteous and omnipotent Providence, appointed to the service of the world wherein they are fixed ; and should rather teach and induce us to adore Him who made them, and appointed them to their respective stations, than lead us into an adoration of themselves, sinful as regards us, and useless as regards them. Of themselves, they have no power ; all the power they exercise, all their capacity of working, with all their display of magnificence and splendour, have been assigned to them by Him, who is their Lord as He is our God : without His appointment and permission, they would be ineffectual and vain. They make no movement, they give no light, no warmth, or other influence, but according to His will and design. It was one object of the inspired writer, in presenting his account of creation, to supply men with such facts concerning the several works of it, as should lift their minds up to the real Author, and oblige them to**

ascribe the honour and offer the worship where they were due. In that age of the world, the worship of the heavenly bodies was very prevalent; Moses, therefore, explained, so far as was necessary, how and by whom they were made. He shewed their origin, their substance, and their subordinate existence. He exposed the sin of the false worship, and declared who was the true object of adoration: he led from the creature to the Creator. Thus we understand that in the giving to mankind an account of creation in order and in truth, something more than mere information was intended; it was not for the gratifying of speculative inquiry; but it was for preservation of men from error and sin. Men had lost or corrupted the knowledge on this subject, which it is undoubted they had at one time previously possessed in sufficient exactness; and one unfortunate consequence of their falling into ignorance was their falling into sin. They had become so debased, as to be unable to raise themselves to a recognition of the Author of the world; because He was unseen, and to rest upon bodies which were seen. These bodies act, certainly, in regular manner; but that is only because God has directed them so to act, and not because they are independent agents. Here it is that much of mistake and mischief has befallen the world. Seeing in this, as in every other ordination of good, the regular working of nature, men have been inclined to think it to possess an influence, independent of any superior power; to regard nature itself as

deity; so turning one of the most benevolent arrangements of God into an occasion and instrument of dishonouring and offending Him—of affronting Him in a point wherein He is peculiarly jealous. For the use of the world which He had made, and for prevention of injury, He has appointed to all things such regularity of proceeding as would hinder them from any considerable or hurtful deviation, except on His own special intervention; and, seeing this, seeing that the day succeeds the night, summer the spring, and, in like manner, the autumn and the winter; seeing the regular rising and setting of the sun and the moon, with the as regular ordination of the stars,—they have conceived that there was no power or principle which could either effect a change in the one or exercise a control over the other; passing by the fact, that this very regularity was bestowed upon them by God, and that without Him it could not have been originally had, or afterwards continued. “O that men were wise, and would understand these things, then should they understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.” O that men would say with the righteous Daniel, “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.”

These bodies are said to have been made to “rule

over the day, and over the night;" *over the day and over the night*, as the commentator<sup>1</sup> well observes, *and not over man*. That this their office of rule was given to them, no more speaks inherent authority, or will, than the assignment of an office to any other thing or person speaks inherent authority in that thing or person. They do not hence either derive secondary or subordinate deity, as has been another error. Deity, to be deity, must be independent, and without cause. These bodies have cause: what is visible must have cause; for, what is visible has parts, and parts are necessarily deducible from a beginning. They are dependent, having body, and body requiring sustenance; thus, there must be the continued supply of a superior influence, in order to maintenance and identical being. Whatever may be the various component parts of that great body of light, or fire, the sun, it must have a constant supply of material, the constant application of such matter as is adapted to its nature; because visible, it is not imperishable,—cannot have been from eternity; and what is not of eternity, being indebted for its existence to a prior cause, cannot be maintained in existence by itself.

The moon and the stars require a similar maintenance. Of what they are exactly composed, we do not know. To us, they are great lights. They were, for aught we have been able to ascertain, composed originally from the chaos, by the proof we have

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

of their fluidity ; consequently, they, also, need the constant application of material adapted to their nature. The information we have regarding them, assures us of these facts ; and, if only on that account, it is highly valuable. We can be under no mistake, as to their creation, and their subordinate and dependent employment. It is certain, that they do not exist of themselves. It is certain, that they were not placed by themselves in the situation which they now occupy ; and, as they were not placed in it by themselves, they cannot of themselves be maintained in it. For their fixedness and their sustenance they must depend on their Creator. They rule over the day, and over the night, because the day and the night are distinguished by their appearance and disappearance. If we were to speak in the strictest propriety of language, we should say that God makes day and night, or that He himself rules over them by his appointed instruments. They are unconscious agents ; and can, therefore, be only the instruments of another in their acts of rule or government, or giving of light, or divisions of times and seasons.

God having completed this portion of his work, saw that it was " good," and pronounced it to be so : He saw its perfect adaptation to his own designs in it ; saw that it was capable of giving light and heat, and of fulfilling the different purposes for which He entered upon it. Let us admire the wisdom of all this, and bend in gratitude and praise before Him who could create such bodies, and so fix or establish

them as to bring them to such vast and wonderful service. They are put into such position, that, awful as they are,—and they are so awful that an at all nearer approach would be our destruction,—their operations are only benevolent and useful. In themselves of such power, whether natural or reflected, any deviation from their appointed course would be death to all things: they are dispersed at such distance, and with such substance between them, that just so much of light and warmth is given as is desirable for the nature of the globe and ourselves to receive. For these things let us be thankful; and, while we admire, as admire we must, these wonderful works of creation, let us devoutly cast our thoughts upwards, in humble adoration, and with purest reverence and love, to their great Maker and Master—even unto God.

## CHAPTER V.

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GENESIS i. 20—23.

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

THAT portion of the nether world was now formed and arranged, was appointed to its several uses and offices, which, although it has being and productiveness, has not sensation or voluntary motion. It was the first created, and the first disposed into its proper order, because there was necessity, that the creatures, for whose habitation and service it was designed, should, so soon as they received their being, find all things ready to their support and enjoyment. This portion of the work, then, being thus completed, and pronounced to be agreeable to its purpose, God next set himself to that other, which was of expected consequence to it. The waters were gathered together, as was requisite,

before the earth received its disposition; and regularity, where there was choice, or discretion, would demand, that therefore the waters should be peopled ere inhabitants were bestowed upon or assigned to the earth; but, besides this, if we consider the natural order of things, we shall have still further reason to recognize the correctness of the arrangement. The noblest work of all was to be applied to last; I mean the creation of man; and, since it was intended that he should be formed, bodily, from the dust of the ground, it is clear, that, in proper course, he should be of the last formation from that substance; and, it would be in highest degree absurd to suppose, that God should commence any part of his work, and leave it imperfect, proceeding, causelessly, to another part, which He must have done, had He created the beasts of the earth before the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air.

There is, moreover, another reason to be given, beyond this, and yet more testifying of fitness and wisdom: if we look to the actual formation of the several kinds of animals, we shall see them to stand in a just order, and with due gradation; beginning with the smallest of the fishes of the sea, and going on to the mightiest; observing, in like manner, the fowls of the air; observing, also, the beasts of the earth,—we shall perceive, in each several kind, from one to the other, a perfect gradation, from the minutest and apparently most insignificant, to the largest and most remarkable; we shall see them forming an entire chain; and shall easily understand, how that;



if we abstract a single link, or one order of beings, there will be a manifest deficiency. This being the case in the parts of the several kinds, wherefore should it not be so in the kinds themselves? Wherefore should not the produce of the waters be the first link in the general chain of the animate beings of this world? And if they be, the reason of their priority of creation is evident enough. In their formation, and probable means or faculties of intelligence, they are somewhat below, in their respective species, the species which answer to them of the fowls which "fly in the open firmament of heaven." The same observation may be made, in our comparison of the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the earth. Now, with what greater force can the argument be carried onward, in the united comparison of these latter with the one last created being? Such a view of the subject will shew us, that there was nothing undesigned or accidental in the order according to which the several parts of creation are known to have proceeded. There was design, and method, and wisdom, and goodness, in it all; and they argue with no little of irreligion as well as of weakness, who would endeavour to persuade that any work of God, of primary creation, or of subsequent arrangement, could be entered upon without fullest motive and truest design. It is, or ought to be, an essential article of faith with every believer in God, that wisdom is in all His works, the smallest as well as the greatest; and we are unable to reconcile ourselves to the supposition that wisdom can be con-

sistent with absence of design. The very term 'wisdom' implies design. "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens." "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: He is excellent in power, and in judgment."

This fifth day was that, wherein animal life was first bestowed; and the first objects of the determination to grant it, were they which the waters were capacitated to produce, and in great measure to sustain, "the fish" that were to "move" in the sea, and "the fowl" that were to "fly above the earth, in the open firmament of heaven." "Now God," says the Commentator<sup>1</sup>, "proceeded to form the lower sort of animals, viz. the fish, and the fowl; which are in many respects inferior to beasts. And the fishes were called moving (in the Hebrew, creeping,) creatures; because their bellies touch the waters, as creeping things do the earth. Both fishes and fowls were made out of the waters; which contained in them many things besides simple water; for the sea and rivers are still richly furnished with various compounds for the nourishment of an innumerable multitude of fishes. The great congruity there is between fish and fowl in many particulars, will not let us doubt they had the same original." "And God," it is said, "created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind;

and every winged fowl after his kind." All these animals, small and great, in their every distinguishing shape and variety, were so produced, at the command of God, out of that water, that element, which was intended for the future residence and nourishment of one kind of them altogether, and, to a certain extent, of a portion of the other. They are described generally, in the first instance, as "the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly in the open firmament of heaven." This description comprehends all their kinds and classes; it declares both the one and the other to have originated from the same source—the fishes which move or creep through the sea, and the fowls which fly through the air.

The next verse is a sort of amplification, setting forth the mighty power of God, in producing those vast beings which excite our astonishment by their bulk, as "the great whales;" and those beauteous ones, which are borne by their wings on the breath of heaven, and which, both from their admirable form, and their extraordinary power and action of movement, draw our wondering regard, as "the winged fowl." The amplification is made, for the purpose likewise of shewing, that there is not any thing, vast, powerful, wonderful, and admirable as it may be, which was not originally ordered by the Word of God. It is not the whale only which is designed in the expression of this verse; the word used in the Hebrew, signifies the largest fish of whatever kind; and it is the intention of it to include them all.

Some interpret it as meaning dragons ; but, interpret it particularly as we will, the same conclusion must be arrived at ; and, it is the concurrent testimony of those on whose judgment we may most securely rely, that the word means the largest beings which inhabit the waters ; and “ moving,” or “ creeping ” as it may be rendered, is applicable to the largest as to the least, and denotes the mode of passage by all from one part of the waters to another : according to our Commentator, before cited, their moving, or creeping, or swimming, flatly on their bodies ; or, according to some other expositors, their moving or passing through the waters, in like manner as other beings move through their proper elements ; as the fowl move through the air, and as man and beast move through the earth ; the manner of motion being different, and adapted in its difference to either element, but the effect being the same. The former construction seems the most correct, for there is an evident distinction drawn between “ the moving ” “ creature,” and “ the fowl that may fly : ” the words may be taken as descriptive of their different properties in this respect ; and, the same distinction being afterwards in two instances drawn, in the twenty-fourth and the twenty-sixth verses, I am confirmed in my opinion, notwithstanding I have thought right to mention the different sense which has been attributed.

It has been matter of some dispute, whether the fowl were really made out of the element of the water, whether they were made out of the earth, or

whether they were made partly from the earth, and partly from the water. The arguments on both sides, in the two first cases, have been had from different sources; from varying construction of the words of Moses, and from the character and formation of the fowls themselves. Here also, I agree with our Commentator. He does not go extensively into the subject, nor even so much so as his plan would permit, and it is to be regretted that he does not; but I take his construction as the more marked by simplicity, and the more consonant with ordinary method, and, therefore, the safest to follow. I do not propose an examination of the arguments of construction, which have been used: to do so, would not be suitable to the scheme of this work: it would involve questions, which, from their ignorance of the Hebrew language, general inquirers would not comprehend; and others may satisfy themselves by seeking to the sources whence the desired information may be gained. I will hereon content myself with saying, that the better reason appears to rest with those who receive the words in their obvious sense; who assent to our authorized version, drawing their argument from it as true construction; and, if that version be correct, all ground of dispute is removed; still, however, such is the pertinacity of human nature, and such our proneness to differ one from another, that men will dispute, be the opposite case never so strong. "The great congruity," says the Commentator<sup>1</sup>, "that there is between fish and fowl

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

in many particulars, will not let us doubt that they had the same original." This is good reasoning. It is evident that the nature of the fowl is different from the nature of the beasts, and there is amplest cause for believing that their creation was altogether different. They were not created on the same day ; and they are, throughout the Scriptures, carefully distinguished from them. Those, to which they are nearest in similitude, are the fishes ; and the only two remaining elements, from one of which it is possible they should have been made, are the water, from which the fishes were made, and the air. There is no authority for suggesting their creation from the latter ; we have, therefore, but the former left to us ; and, when the Scriptures tell us that they were made of it, why should we not believe the statement ? It is indeed true, that in the nineteenth verse of the second chapter, there is that which appears to contradict it, but which is in fact no contradiction at all. It is there said—"Out of the ground the Lord formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them : and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." It is not intended that we should infer from hence, that the fowl were formed from the earth, or the dust of the ground ; but that both the beasts and the fowl, respectively, were formed out of that substance which God created in the beginning ; and they are so joined together in the repetition of the account of creation to avoid confusion of sentence : these two only are

mentioned by name, because these two only were brought unto Adam : the fishes could not have been brought unto him : if they could have been brought, we should have had, either them and the fowl named together as of the same origin, or, probably, the whole three united in creation, the beasts, the fishes, and the fowl, as the beasts and the fowl are now united ; but, as it was, the beasts and the fowl are mentioned in general terms as to their creation : they are stated to have been made from the ground, the substance of the world ; the particular matter having been already demonstrated, it was not necessary to repeat it. The concluding part of the verse says—"Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." He gave names to all beings ; he discriminated their properties ; but it was not possible to bring before him other than the beasts and the fowl ; the fishes could not be moved from their element. As to those who would urge, that the fowls were made from a composition of water and earth, I hold the idea to be altogether futile, and no more than mere fancy ; as invented, or suggested, in order to get rid of an apparent difficulty. The case after all, must be made to rest on the right interpretation of the words of Moses ; and when, as I have said, the weight of testimony is in favour of the present version, *it* we are bound to receive. I shall mention another opinion which has been holden, and I do mention it because it has been holden, and not because I conceive it to have any force ; and that is, that there being two kinds of

fowl, one aquatic, and the other terrene; the one was formed from the earth, and the other from the water: Moses, however, speaks of the whole kind of fowl under one head; he makes no distinction; and why should we make any? The fowl are said to have been brought forth with the fishes, from the waters; and it is added, that they were so brought forth that they might “fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” If they had been brought forth from the earth, they could not have flown above it. They are afterwards commanded to “multiply in the earth.” The sacred Historian states the fact of creation, giving a reason why these were created from a different element from that in which they were principally to reside, and to draw their food, and to have their purpose. The nature of the water is not very dissimilar to that of the air; and from the former they drew their lightness, and each other property which enabled them to move in the latter. To these arguments, let us add this one—whatever was formed from the earth exclusively, must come under the general description of terrestrial animals; and it is not so in this instance.

Wonderful was this, as was every part of creation; and our awe of Him, by whom it was brought about, cannot be too reverential and deep. These beings were made with all the admirable qualities of which we now see them to be possessed and to be adorned with; whatever power, whatever instinct, whatever clothing—it was at that time appointed, and yet continues, and shall continue, until God’s purpose in



the creation be fulfilled, and it be advanced unto its grand consummation: all was excellently appointed and adapted, both to the seeking and obtaining of food and sustenance, and to protection and safeguard, each from the attack of other. The least of them is provided with means for avoidance of the aggression of the largest. There is no seeming deficiency which is not made up by some supplying quality. The non-possession of magnitude and strength, is compensated by subtilty and swiftness: the absence of that which gives force to the blow by intensity of penetration. The smallest has, thus, the power of defending itself against its most powerful adversary, and, on occasion, of annoying it in its turn. The fowl, to whom was appointed the capacity of conveying themselves through the air, are furnished with wings, as proper to bear them on that element; the fishes—with fins, enabling them to swim in the water, and to pass with rapidity through it, and the water-fowl—with feet and beaks so formed and arranged as to enable them to dive under the waters, and yet at the same time to be protected against the inconveniences of cold. Whoever looks into the form and structure of these animals, will find abundant reason to praise the Creator for the many and marvellous contrivances by which the means and defences wherewith He has provided them are disposed and maintained—their pliability, their readiness for instant use or action, the constant supply of nourishment for them which is contained, as in a reservoir, within themselves. If,

as regarding fishes, we cast our observation on the impenetrability by the water of the scale, or the unceasing supply of the oil, which, while it gives warmth and life, protects it, also, from any injurious influence of the water; if we examine their shape, which, from the formation of it, is well calculated for gliding through the fluid; if, the flexibility of their muscles, which gives, too, as much strength as agility; if their fins, which regulate all their motions, and preserve their balance, how are we compelled to admire! Again, let us look for a moment to the fowls of the air, especially in that particular quality by which they are enabled to bear themselves above. Their wings are so situated as to present “two levers, which keep the body in a just poise; at the same time they perform the function of oars, which, by bearing on the element that resists them, advance the body in a contrary direction: the tail is a counterpoise to the head and neck, and serves the bird instead of a rudder, whilst he rows with his wings; but this rudder is not only instrumental in preserving the equilibrium of the flight; it likewise enables the bird to rise, descend, and turn, where it pleases, for, as soon as the tail is directed to one point, the head turns to the opposite quarter<sup>1</sup>.” See their plumage; the skill with which it is formed; the usefulness to which it is applied; the adaptation of the various parts to their respective purposes.

<sup>1</sup> Nature Displayed.

There is nothing concerning them which is not contrived in wisdom and goodness.

When God had, in this manner, and with these properties, made these creatures, He “blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.” The power of production, which had been thus temporarily bestowed on the sea, was, now that the design of that grant was accomplished, taken from it; and, in lieu thereof, as a means of future creation, and in order to a perpetual succession, the power of propagation was imparted to the beings which had been produced.

The truth of this account of creation is evident, if but from hence: these beings in analysis, are dissolvable into the several substances of which the waters are composed, and the waters have no longer the power of producing them. Those substances cannot now unite; nor can any extraneous action upon the waters, whether of the wind, or of the sun, create animal life out of them. The truth of the Mosaic History is, I say, well evidenced hereby. All have continued from that time to the present; and unchanged in any part of their structure or properties. Omnipotent wisdom is visible. This is a remark, applying to creation in general, animal and vegetable. God ordained it so to be, throughout perpetual generations; and each kind is thus essentially propagated. The divine blessing was now vouchsafed, commanding the inhabitants of the waters to be fruitful

therein, to multiply, and to fill the waters; and the fowl also, whose origin was of the waters, were endued with the power or property of continuing their kind, without necessity of recourse to the waters, as the parental spring; they were commanded to multiply in the earth; and we may observe, however many of them fix their habitations by the sides of rivers, and however they deposit their eggs, and produce their young ones, near unto, or almost within them, yet do they more properly belong to the earth. The attraction of some of them to the waters, is a proof of their origin from the waters; it is a connection, in origin, of the fishes of the sea with the fowls of the air; it is a link, by which the two general kinds are united; and may without stretch of conjecture, have been so designed. It was necessary to produce the fowls from the water, that they might possess a nature which should capacitate them for flying in the air, and holding it as their proper territory, if we may use such an expression as descriptive of their peculiar habits. If they had been produced from the earth, their attraction would have been to the earth, and they would have sought to it as their parent; but, it was God's intention that they should be "fowls of the air," and therefore it was, that He commanded the waters to bring, or send them forth. They were made from that element; and the command to fly in the air, and to multiply in the earth, would prevent their again so drawing to the water, as to frustrate or interfere with his purpose. It gave the desired direction to their nature. It was the

divine contrivance, that every thing should be adapted to its appointment, and as a means to the effecting of it, God made them in their nature agreeable thereunto. He had decreed, or ordained, that the air should be peopled; and, this was his method. Creation was a regular plan: it was perfect in all its parts; and we may be sure that the methods, which divine wisdom employed, were perfectly wise, and perfectly fitted to their end.

In these doings, how much is there at which to wonder! and, truly, in what one part of creation are there not to be found subjects of wonder and praise? None of it is without its wonders; but, in this world beneath, if we were required to declare what is eminently wonderful, that is, what appears so to us,—for, undoubtedly, each part is admirable as the other, and our feeling of wonder is greater or less, as our faculties of comprehending and discriminating may be greater or less;—in this lower world the wonders of the ocean strike upon us with strongest effect. Its own magnificence and awfulness are much; and, in those who rightly consider, who proceed in their investigation from effects unto causes, from servant unto master, how deep must be the fear and admiration of Him, who could contrive, who could make, who can control it! What must be His power, who could “set its bounds by a perpetual decree which it should not pass”—who can calm its waves, and allay its turbulence! “O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea,

wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts." Looking to the inhabitants of the waters, considering the diversity of them; their sizes, from the largest to the most minute,—and there are some so minute as to be nearly invisible,—their admirable properties; their natural defences against any danger of the element, in which they hold their existence; the facility and the quickness with which they move themselves;—all impress us with wonder, and create in us an admiration of the might of that will which made and disposed them, which it is almost beyond the means of any language to declare. Behold the great whale, whose every movement causes a disturbance far and wide; and consider the small fish, which skims with somewhat of imperceptibility over the surface; and you will find either one equally wondrous: either one possesses an equal regard from its Maker; the care of His Providence is alike upon either. What is worldly magnitude, or worldly minuteness, in the eye of Infinity? God sees not as we see. His perfectness does not admit the difference which meets our sight and judgment. "His ways are not our ways; nor are his thoughts our thoughts. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and God's thoughts than our thoughts." Therefore have the goodness and wisdom of His Providence attended equally upon them. Every arrangement has been made which is suitable to their respective natures, and probable wants: there is no deficiency in any point; there is nothing faulty

in the original design, and nothing lacking in the care which has engaged to provide for the maintenance, safety, and well-being of all. Large as is the former, bulky and unwieldy as it may seem to us, yet is it perfect in its kind. God, in the beginning, saw that it was good, and blessed it. Its faculties are proportioned to, or made to assort with, its magnitude; there is nothing unnecessary in all that huge mass, which an unintelligent view might be induced to pronounce irregular, unsightly and clumsy: there is no apparent inconvenience which has not been foreseen, and is not counterbalanced by some exquisite contrivance and effect. If we look at the latter, we shall see, small and unworthy of attention as to a superficial inquirer it may appear, and useless as to the unwise and the ignorant of God's ways it may be deemed in its generation, that it is neither insignificant, nor unworthy of attention, nor useless in its kind; and that it is equally provided, and equally perfect in its generation. There is a purpose in every being which has sprung up at the command of God: he has not made for nought any thing which he has made. It is not to be supposed, as has been already insisted, that perfect wisdom would act, in any instance, without adequate and justifying design. The fitness of the parts of the several members of the minutest kind, may yet be made visible to the careful observer: there is a defence in activity, useful as the most potent weapon; and the exquisite point with which some of them are armed, is oftentimes sufficient against the attack of the largest and strong-

est adversary ; and will work them out a deliverance, where otherwise it would seem impossible.

Let these things lead us into thoughts grateful and reverential of the power and care of God, which are over all his works ; which have been seen in their creation, and which are still seen in their preservation ; which are negligent of none ; in whose sight all are exactly displayed ; and whose admirable wisdom and unspeakable goodness, are manifested in whatever He has commanded and done.



## CHAPTER VI.

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GENESIS i. 24, 25.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind : and God saw that it was good.

THE heaven, the air, and the water, were now arranged, and peopled with their respective tenants, each one according to its kind and capacity. The earth, likewise, equally arranged, and stored with all manner of food, and whatever was good for the use and enjoyment of its intended occupants, stood ready for their reception also ; God, therefore, created " the cattle, the creeping thing, and beast of the earth," comprising every description of irrational animal, which was to have habitation and sustenance therein. He created these on the sixth day, being that on which he had determined to create the more noble creature, who was to have dominion over all. He created these first, because they were designed to be in subjection to man ; and the earth could not be said to be pre-

pared for the service of man, until provision should be made upon it of whatever he should govern or possess. There is no kind of animal, at this day extant, which was not then appointed. The description of the sacred writer is threefold: he makes his division into three great classes, "cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth." Interpreters have much differed in their use of the word translated "cattle;" some conceiving it to mean animals of the larger size; some, simply to signify four-footed beasts; while others oppose it to the word which is in the same sentence translated "beast of the earth," and would have us to understand by it the more tameable and domestic animals; and this last-named interpretation seems to be that which is most consonant to the sense of the passage; and it will greatly assist in the proper presentation to us of the three kinds of creatures here stated to be made, under the several heads of "cattle," as we commonly render the word; of "creeping things," called by us reptiles; and of "beasts of the earth," or those which are not tamed to obedience, or the ordinary purposes of man. Agreeable to this is the opinion of the Commentator<sup>1</sup>, who says, "Behemah, which we translate cattle, always signifies the flocks and herds of tame beasts, when it is distinguished from Chaja, which we translate in the end of the verse, beasts of the earth, that is, wild beasts; between which two he (Moses) mentions a third kind of living creatures on the

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

earth, which he calls Remesh, creeping things; because whatever feet they have, they are so short and small, that they seem to the naked eye to have none at all; but to crawl upon their bellies on the ground." Moses, besides, it is to be had in mind, is speaking of the objects of creation, as creation at the time he was speaking appeared to mankind. Before the fall had corrupted not only man but all things else, there was nothing noxious on the earth; and those animals which we call wild, and which are here denominated "beasts of the earth," did not so resist the dominion of man as they now resist it. There was the same relative difference in the nature and disposition of them all—the small and the great, the strong and the weak, the simple and the subtle, or whatever might be their several distinctions; but they were all under a willing control, refusing no submission, inclined to no resistance; and none of them exhibiting the savage tempers and rough habits which have not since ceased to be observable. These, as we are informed, were made out of the dust of the ground; the original of them was the earth. "Let the earth bring forth," were the ordaining words. "And," it is said, "God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind." The mode of their creation, we are authorized to conclude, was the commandment of God that they should proceed from the earth. In this operation, there are two points demanding our notice. In the first place, we remark the expression, "God *made*."

it is said, and truly said, that "God made" them, yet are we not thence to infer that He created them by any other mode than that of commandment. He "made" them without his will or commandment, but they had or obtained existence; and, in giving their existence, He began. It is the other point of note, that He "brought" the earth to "bring" forth the earth: He did not give it the power which it previously possessed, and both bestowed and received. The earth did not bring forth the influence of heaven upon them, but God formed them out of the materials so prepared, and produced them in their full perfection after their several kinds<sup>1</sup>. He directed the earth to produce them, assigning it a power to do so, which power was to cease with this first exercise of it: it was given but for this special occasion. That it did cease, and never again was exercised, is clear to us from a circumstance of the flood, when Noah, in order to preservation of the living things of the earth, according to their respective kinds, was commanded to take with him into the ark two of each. God did not, as He might have done, destroy all, and command the earth once more to produce; but He said, "Of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

*OF CREATION:  
The description  
of man, until provision should  
be made for him, at this day ex-  
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alive with thee ; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive." Creation, properly so, was to be but of one occurrence: it was a power belonging solely unto God, and even He would not lessen its awfulness by repetition.

We have also another argument. The animals of which, in many countries, whole species have been destroyed, have never there been renewed: the earth does not reproduce them: it shows no approach to that power of production which it had in the beginning: it does not offer so much as an abortive attempt. Propagation, by each one of its kind, is the only method by which they are multiplied and continued. Some persons have affected to argue, that all these creatures were brought into life by the influence of the sun's heat upon the earth: now, notwithstanding that it is neither impossible nor improbable, that, in the process of their creation, the vivifying influence of the sun might have been employed by the Omnipotent, yet is it at the same time certain, that it could have been used in no other character or capacity than that of a subordinate or temporary instrument; for, if it had been of the higher description, why does it not produce them still? Why are not various kinds of animals still and constantly seen springing from the ground? whereas, as I have by inference just before remarked, no animal has hitherto been discovered,

whose original may not be traced back to primal times; and, not even is an assertion, or a suggestion, known to have been offered, that any new kind of animal has since been produced. Indeed, they, who would advocate the point now denied, do, in their deduction, make an admission they by no means intend: they, unwittingly, ascribe creation, as we do, to a special act of divine power: they prove, if they prove any thing, that, whatever influence it was which bestowed form and life, bestowed it with special design. If it were the sun, acting on the earth, it must have been by Almighty plan, as an original. From whence, or from whom, did the sun obtain this power? This is a question which they may, perhaps, fancy to be of no difficult solution: they may say, using a word always at hand to the ignorant, that it was of the *natural* influence of the sun; but what, then, caused this influence so suddenly and altogether to cease, is the inquiry in rejoinder? Did this great, and first, and sole effort, exhaust it? or, rather, was it not unrenewed by Him who temporarily gave it? That it was, *if* it were at that time employed, unrenewed by Him who gave it, or, more fittingly to speak, who commanded it, is manifest in that it no longer exists. Thus do we see, how necessarily, even in our inquiries into the creation of the lower animals, we are driven back, or up to a First Cause, to God Himself: as there is no account, besides that of the Bible, which claims authenticity on the subject; as all else is conjecture; and as we have so good reason to be-

lieve the Bible account to be authentic, we adjudge ourselves on sure ground in taking it as exact. The truth of it has been confirmed by every argument and evidence either of reason or of revelation: there is in it nothing which is inconsistent with natural inferences, or with the notions we have of the wisdom and majesty of God. As to that argument, of which so frequent use has been had, that the sun does yet, and constantly, exercise this power in the more minute instances of animal life, and that insects are almost visibly brought by it into life and motion; and such being the fact, that it has, or had, equal power for the production of the larger bodies; we would allow the latter part of the position to be well-founded, if the former were not open to objection. It is open to objection. It is a most palpable error. The inquirer, who has placed himself under its cover, will find it somewhat to interfere with the soundness of his reasoning, that, not only does the heat of the sun, which to his view, generates these animals, bring them into active motion, but that it raises them, the very same, also, in kind, which have been heretofore, and with the same habits and qualities in every respect; in nothing new, or out of usual course; and further, a diligent examination will shew him, that these insects are not created, or produced by the heat of the sun, out of any different, or fresh matter, or from any substance properly belonging to the earth; but that the heat of the sun acts upon the egg, or other deposit, and that, where the sun seems, in innumerable instances, to be changing particles of

earth, or what matter soever it may be, into living creatures, it is following a natural order, that is, obeying the will of the great Creator, according to his first ordinance, and appointment. This is as easy of conception, as is the rising of the seed, which we sow in the ground, into herb or tree, by means of the united influence of heat, of moisture, and of the earth itself. If it be answered, that the earth can produce none other than those same creatures, which at its creation it was able to produce, and that *therefore* none that are new in kind, do now spring from it—Is not this, to make no additional use of the argument so sought to be thrust aside, is it not an attempt at answer, completely destructive of the imputed power, or independence of nature, and consequently, corroborative of our records of creation, or, in other words, revelation? Does it not admit, that it has exercised no power, but that which has been assigned to it by a superior Being; that it shall exercise none; and that these words have, in effect, been said unto it, which were said unto the sea, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further”? The power of nature has, by its own very advocates, been limited as to time; and, it need hardly be insisted, that, that which owns any limits, whether of time, or of space, or of what else, cannot be independent power.

It may here be not unappropriately remarked, that these animals are described as entirely created out of the earth—“Let the earth bring forth”—they derive their whole nature from the earth: there is in



them nothing which is not earthy; their breath, their instinct, all that they have as concerning the powers of thought and provision is of the earth, and tends but to purpose of earth, or condition of mortality; and on this account, we understand that their total destination must be to the earth; and that their being has been designed as its property alone; as says the Psalmist, "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust"—and the Preacher, "Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and *the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?*" We do not take upon us to say what would have been the ultimate condition, or manner of the change, had man not fallen, in lieu of the painful dissolution which is now the lot of all beings, of this portion of creation. That it would not have been as it is, we may securely say, since the effect of the fall was injury to the whole visible world. In truth, in all our inquiries, relative to the first state and appearance of the world, there must be an essential imperfectness, in both material and comprehension. Our own capacities, weakened by the fall, are not adequate to the subject: we cannot conceive of former things; all our thoughts and opinions must be formed according to present appearances, and directed by the revelation of God; and, where *that* is silent, we must be ignorant. These are our only sources of information, and our only bases of judgment; and, if in any points they do not meet our wishes, we may not seek to go beyond them.

The benevolence of the Creator, in the arrange-

ment or disposal of this part of his work, is large and wonderful, as well in plan or contrivance, as in manner and effect. Each animal is formed with properties and powers suited to its assigned body and character; each, moreover, is so formed, as to be of excellent use in its kind; and those which appear to us wild, ravenous, and noxious, have still an intention of service, and a value in nature. In so vast and various a globe, there must be many exhalations and productions, which require to be absorbed, or destroyed: hence may the insects which creep on the earth, or which fly in the air, be made useful to us, and in this manner repay the gift or loan of existence, and the means afforded for support of it, being made the instrument and channel of carrying off whatever might injure us, or tend prematurely to our death. And, if there were not birds and beasts of prey, how would all those animals increase upon us, making our lives one continued scene of danger and of terror! when, therefore the noxious, or in any-wise offensive animal has performed its appointed part or office, it becomes the food of another, which in its turn succeeds to a similar destiny. And let no one arraign this way of proceeding on the part of the Almighty Disposer. Death is the common and inevitable lot. The ultimate and sole destination of these creatures is, as I have said, the earth, from which they were called; and, why may not God make the mode of their death to be useful? why not mark the return of them to their parent earth, by causing it to minister to the general benefit? and, what greater hardship is ex-

perienced by the beings to whom dissolution thus happens, one by another, than is undergone by those which God has more peculiarly appointed for the food, or other service of man? At some time they must all die; they cannot live for ever; and the dispensation, which would effect their death at once,—the observation is now general—is, assuredly, not more severe than that which would accomplish the same end, by the gradual approaches and painful suffering of disease. To them, it is far less severe. They are not endued with abilities, for mitigating or relieving themselves from the attacks and inconveniences of disease: to die by disease is to them most miserable: they can have no consolation in suffering: under it they can neither seek their maintenance, nor lessen their pain; and the prevention of all this evil is more an act of mercy, than a dispensation of severity. It is but the *stroke* of death which they endure; they have not that previous apprehension of it, which makes humanity so to shrink. But, besides this more general reasoning, there is a reflection, which, as it is paramount to all other, ought to be sufficient to us on the subject. All these beings were created for wise, and well-founded purposes; and, it is the prerogative of the Creator to remove them from life, when in his judgment those purposes shall be fulfilled, that is, in his own proper time, and according to his own pleasure. It is nothing more, in truth, than to carry into effect, by one of his own means, an already appointed sentence; and, of the fitness of time and mode, is not He the

Rightful Judge? This is the way in which it is pious and wise, to regard the appointments and doings of God; believing that they are all of them founded in wisdom, and executed in utmost benevolence, as well as in straitest righteousness. In Him is not, and cannot be, unrighteous, or unmerciful, or unequal dealing. Rectitude is the essential rule of his conduct.

These observations must not be closed without our adverting to another point, on this part of the subject, which cannot have failed to strike the inquirer into the works of the great Creator. The earth is intended for the occupation and enjoyment of man, all things in it being made subservient to his uses; but, it is obvious that the human species is and must be of slow multiplication, in comparison of this important end; and, consequently, a large portion of the earth will for ages and ages remain uninhabited by its destined masters. Still, it was not the purpose of God that it should, in this intermediate space of time, remain unoccupied and waste. On this account, it is not out of reason and probability that, until the more proper occupiers should succeed, *these* should be in possession—should hold it in charge, as it were, and make of it to themselves an use and advantage. These very animals, also, in the first settlement of a country, are far from being unserviceable; ere the more generally employed and domestic kinds may be procured and trained to their design, they supply food and clothing; by inducing men to habits of hardihood and activity, which, in-

deed, they compel in the seeking and subduing of them, they fit men to the necessarily rough state of primary occupation ; and, in barbarous lands, where man is uncivilized, we find most things which relate to the support of his life to depend upon them : as civilization advances, they disappear, and the cattle, as the word stands translated in this instance, take their place in usefulness and enjoyment.

Now let us admire the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, which called into being so many kinds of creatures, which so endued them with properties advantageous to themselves and to others. There is every variety of them which we can desire or conceive. Those, which are fitted for man's domestic purposes, are made with such nature as to render them easily reconciled to obedience of his will ; those, which are even savage, and fierce, and untameable, are yet in many respects useful to him ; directly so, I mean ; and he is gifted with abilities, whereby, if he cannot soften their dispositions, he can subject them to his service and pleasure. To particularize, would be foreign to the present plan : it would lead into a wide field, and not be in character with the design. Enough is said to show the veracity of the Bible account—enough, to lead us into adoration of the might of that High and Awful Being, on whose command they were brought forth. We see them, created from the same material from which ourselves have, bodily, sprung, the dust of the ground, and with instincts and appetites similar to our own ; in considerable degree too, with powers of provision,

which vastly raise our wonder, and would almost cause us to think that they approach more nearly to us than they really do. But, they have no other connection with us than as earthly beings: whatever faculties they possess, they derive, by the command of God, from the earth; and therefore, whatever powers of provision they exercise, are of it, and tend to their use as earthly creatures. Here ceases all comparison between them and ourselves: in nothing else is there a similarity—they go not beyond. God created them for the service of earth, and endued them with no quality or property but such as should be consistent with their station and necessities as creatures of earth. To it they return: when they die they perish; and, it would have borne an appearance of uncalled for severity, to have granted to them any superior or mental endowments, by which they could have understood all the realities of their condition. *To know* that with death would end their being, to have a consciousness in the matter, would be an unavailing and a perpetual source of misery; they are, thus, devoid of any mental perceptions which would impose considerations of that kind. A reasonable being, who is aware that bodily dissolution will some day happen to him, has a consolation—has even a hope and a trust in it, that a better state of existence is in preparation for him; but, what and how wretched would be the thoughts of his heart, if he knew that death was not only the end of his mortal life, but the destruction of his being altogether! So is God's goodness apparent in all

things, each being suited to its proper appointment, every one being accordant with the circumstances of its kind.

All these creatures are in their true purpose designed for the service of man : numberless generations of them, certainly, pass away, and return to their dust, without being in themselves of immediate or visible advantage to him ; but, we must consider, that, besides their use as present occupants of the earth, it is necessary that their kinds should have uninterrupted propagation and succession, in order that there might be no deficiency when man should appear to require and claim them. How great and manifold is the goodness of the Lord ! How is it to be seen in all his works ! Whatever has proceeded from his hands, has in it a purpose of wisdom and goodness, and should teach us to adore Him, and to love Him ; to fear Him, and to obey Him. We behold these his wondrous doings ; these, the operations of his will ; all of them admirable in their formation and use ; many of them beauteous and delightful to look on ; many of them magnificent, astonishing, and fearful. Yet, of whatever power, of whatever strength, of whatever appearance, they are all subjected to the dominion of man ; and, how, and in what respect ? By means of the superior faculties, caused by the high favour shewn to him in his creation ; and, as they are creatures of earth, though their personal strength is much greater than his own, he is, by the force of his mind, able to master and control it. This their condition, then, should

set before him the amount of value at which mortal endowments are to be estimated: he enjoys *them* in common with the beasts that perish, and, in some points, in less measure—with those, whose “spirit goeth downwards when they die.” For all these wonders, it is our duty to praise and magnify our God, and to laud His glorious name; acknowledging His power to be supreme and infinite; acknowledging Him as the Master and Ruler of all, whose name only is excellent in all the world. The strength and might of all else is but as dust, exists but by his command, and fades away if He wills it. The same word that commanded the existence of the smallest reptile, commanded the existence of “Behemoth;” and each is equal in his sight, as being of his creation; each is to Him of equal observance and care. The same Almighty Power created either; and it required no greater, or closer, or larger application of it, to create the one than the other. Either He pronounced, when He went down to view it, to be equally “good;” to be equally worthy of Himself as Contriver and Framer; equally adapted to the purpose for which its existence was designed, and, by reason thereof, as equally having the promise of his own superintending providence. These are things which ought to sink deeply into the hearts of men, as the reasonable and favoured creatures of this great God and Creator: they are they which ought to induce them to all holy, and faithful, and obedient thoughts and resolves; to all just notions of other creatures, of themselves, and of Him; for, by



such is it that his purpose, his great and gracious purpose in them, will be best and most acceptably fulfilled, and his sentence of approval, or of blessing, be most happily realized.

## CHAPTER VII.

## GENESIS i. 26.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth <sup>1</sup>.

How marked and gracious a difference of expression is observable in the announcement of the will of God for the creation of man, from that which appointed the other parts and beings of the world ! The words of it are important in a large variety of ways : they declare the original superiority of man, telling us that he was something more, in design and capacity, than all other living creatures, which

<sup>1</sup> The creation of man is described with peculiar solemnity. 1. " He was made in the image and likeness of God ;" invested with reason and speech ; endued with the knowledge of his Creator, and made an heir of immortality, not like unto " the beasts that perish." 2. He was invested with dominion over all the animal tribes, the vegetables, and the earth itself. 3. Whereas all other animals were created " after their kinds," the sex of the human species is particularized : " Male and female created he them." And this by a distinct formation of the woman out of the man. The separate process of both is described in the second chapter, not to interrupt the general account of the creation in the first.—DR. HALES.

had been formed by the commandment of the Almighty; they certify us, that for him was all this wonderful scenery contrived and arranged; and that he was created to be, under God, the lord and possessor of the whole.—“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” This constituted and proclaimed man’s excellence: he was of the direct workmanship of the Divine Maker; he was made “in the image, and after the likeness of God,” that is, as we are taught in the recapitulation of the second chapter, the frame having been put together of “the dust of the ground,” his life was bestowed by means of that process which is termed “breathing into his nostrils the breath of life.” In the statement of God’s pleasure that he should be made, the subordinate material is not mentioned, as though the mention of it would have detracted from the greatness and excellence of the work; it would seem that man’s excellence not lying in his outward form, but in that endowment described under “the image and likeness of God,” to this the attention is to be called, this making him the being he was designed to be. His bodily frame is dust: his real character is the “living soul” he became by God’s “breathing into him the breath of life.” Admirable, therefore, is the sacred historian in his account: he presents man in the height of his nature, on his first entering upon his existence, and leaves for after statement the fact that he was “formed from the dust of the ground.” It was the purpose to shew man in his true design, as a creature of immortality;

and he could not have adopted a more fitting method. Dominion is immediately declared to be his, over all things besides that have breath. The kind was created, male and female; the man, indeed, was first created, and the woman afterwards from his substance; but, since she was formed from him, being "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh," she is, as essentially part of him, included in the act of creation. They then received the blessing of God, being commanded, and by the command enabled, to be "fruitful," to "multiply," to "replenish the earth," to "subdue it," to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." There is no doubt that this original dominion was much superior to, and more acknowledged, than that which man exercises now; but, even yet he is lord of all: he makes the earth, and all things that are in it, to be subservient to him; the strongest and the fiercest animals, if he so set his mind, are brought to his direction and use; all the difficulties and ruggednesses of the earth are overcome by him; and, by force of the intelligence with which God hath endued him, he is able to conquer, in great measure, and in sufficient degree for any desirable object, the dangers of the sea, and fearlessly to encounter the violence of the wind, and in almost security from ill to defy the seeming irregularities of nature. Thus much of his original excellence still remains, shewing, that the image of God in him, obscured as it may be, is not defaced; and that "the

likeness," after which he was created, notwithstanding the deformities cast upon it by the fall, still exists, and will be restored in its beauty and perfectness.

It is desirable that we should consider the subject of the creation and superiority of man, somewhat at large. It is an interesting and a fruitful subject, and will amply repay any pains of attention we may bestow upon it, provided we suffer ourselves to be altogether guided by the Revelation of God. Our inquiry will, generally, concern these points—In what consisted that divine image and likeness, in and after which man was created; what was his immortal, and what was his earthly character; what was his original destiny; what was the dominion he had over the earth; what, in short, was his state of innocence and happiness. To the first of these points, the present chapter shall be directed; and here, the proper and scriptural meaning of the words—"Let us make Man in our image, after our likeness," will be our endeavour. Various interpretations have been given of them; but we must be aware, that no interpretation of them can be right, which does not come to us under the sanction of Scripture. If we wander from Scripture, rejecting its rules and guidance, we are necessarily wrong. It is from it, we have our only account; and we are obliged, because it is our only account,—for, it is the only revealed, and therefore, the only authentic source of information,—to receive it as our standard; and consequently, are bound to turn from whatever will not submit to be

brought to its proof. The origin of man, and God's intention in his existence, cannot be learnt by us elsewhere than in Revelation. As he was created by God, who but God can say how, or from, what he was created? Man knows it not, of himself; all *his* knowledge regarding it, must come from the Creator. As his creation was designed by God, who but God can declare his original destiny? The divine mind cannot be known, unless communicated from itself. "Where was man, when God laid the foundations of the earth?" "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor?" Let us, then, banish all ideas and conceptions on this subject, which have not their justification and authority in Holy Scripture. Mere speculation, however ingenious, and however dazzling, cannot bring us near unto the truth; *it* is but man's opinion, man's fancy, man's error it may be said; God's Word alone is certain, and it is everlasting. *It* cannot be overthrown, while the other is liable to be dissipated by every breath of new doctrine. Having its rise in human thought, it depends on human caprice.

How was Man created? is our question. From what substance, or essence, and by what operation? The operation was immediate from God, more immediate than was that of any other part of the divine workmanship. He simply commanded all other to be: He said—"Let there be light—let there be a firmament—let the earth bring forth—let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven"—and "let the earth bring forth the living creature after his

kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind." But, it was not so in the present instance. God appears to have set himself more directly, and more solemnly to work. The first thing to be observed, therefore, is, that He commences in such manner, as that it might be understood He was about to produce that, which should highly excel all that had been hitherto seen. We are not to suppose, that the particular mode of expression was accidental, that there was in it any absence of design, or that it is a different, but unmeaning arrangement of the words only, on the part either of the Creator, or of the Historian. The character of neither, will admit such supposition. There is no word of God, or of the inspiration of God, which is casual or unnecessary. The very work itself, would refuse to verify the conclusion of accident of expression, or of form of speech, being exalted in kind above all that had preceded it, and we being compelled, as well as authorized to distinguish Man, as of the peculiar workmanship of God. He said, "Let us make Man." He did not command the earth to produce him, as he had done in the several instances of other living beings: He had acted, in respect of *them*, with truest reason in commanding them entirely from the earth, for, all their properties were to be derived from the earth,—their bodily form, and the breath which animated it; and there is nothing in them which does not partake of, or which is not rather had, from that their original substance: their life comes from it—returns, likewise to it. Man was to be of different

order, and in pursuance of the design of it, was ordained to be created in different manner and circumstance. He was not to be, either altogether or principally, a creature of earth. "Let us make Man"—the whole Godhead is speaking, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit; since it was God the Father, who called the world into being, by the Word his Eternal Son; and his Spirit it was who "moved upon the face of the waters." The Trinity, thus, was concerned in the work; and, most properly is it the recorded language used at this time, "Let us make Man"—us, in our united capacity; that the Three Persons may be to Man but One God, blessed as he shall nevertheless be, by receiving of the bounty and benefit of their distinct operation.

This expression naturally leads us to anticipate some extraordinary work; and we must in common sense believe, that to the ensuing words a very important meaning is attached—"In our image, after our likeness." The words themselves are remarkable; and, even if the previous expression had not been made use of, if it had been only said, that "God created man in his own image, after his own likeness," it would have been clear that there was a distinction of value; but, it is complete when taken with the former part of the sentence, and, one would think, irresistible. What is, we ask, the meaning in this place of the words—"In our image, after our likeness?" Some have maintained, that it consists in the government of the world, the dominion over all things, with which God then charged man; but this



is manifestly incorrect: the remainder of the verse especially assigns that government and dominion; and the assignment was made, *because* he had been "created in the image, and after the likeness" of God; and it was *that* creation which gave him the ability to receive and exercise the offices of the assignment. Others have made it to consist in a superior intelligence; in a state of innocence; in an erect shape of body. With respect to the shape of his body, that is a point upon which we need hardly dwell: it is a shape, or form, that admirably distinguishes him, so far as it is concerned, from the members of the irrational animated creation; but, it cannot be called an image or a likeness of God, who is Spirit, and to whom we may not ascribe form. The qualities of intelligence and innocence are, indisputably, an effect of the creation "in the image and after the likeness" of God, because God is perfect, and they are essential to a condition of perfectness: they are, therefore, but parts of a whole; it lies in no single one of them, nor yet in all of them together. To the Scripture it is we must apply for the solution; and there we shall readily find it. The second chapter of this book of Genesis sums up the work of creation; and in the repetition which it gives of the account of the creation of man, the matter, to my understanding, at least, is made clear. The original account says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The re-

petition account states—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." It is here that we first certainly learn that man was "formed of the dust of the ground:" the first and great information regarding him is, not that he was *made* "of the dust of the ground," but that he was "*made* in the image, and after the likeness" of God, although it may be inferred, from the twenty-ninth verse, where God says, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." If there had not been something earthy in his composition, he would not have had a sustenance appointed to him from the earth; and, as the following verse grants the green herb, which also grew out of the earth, as food for those other animals which had been previously said to have been called from the earth, we may justly infer that man was originally in some respect earthy too; but, still, as I have noticed, it is by inference only that we conceive any thing of the fact from the original account; and, as it is permitted to be learnt by inference only, we may be sure it was God's purpose that man's earthly character should not be brought first and most prominently forward, but that nature, in which was his excellence, in which was his destiny; that nature, whatever it was, which he obtained from his creation in God's image, and after God's likeness. There is an observation, which may

now be advantageously offered.—In the first account, the expressions are, “Let us make man—so God created man.” In the second, where the twofold character is brought into view, the words are, “God *formed* man of the dust of the ground.” Thus, man was not *made*, or *created*, of the dust of the ground; he was only *formed*, or shaped, out of it; it was the other process by which he became the creature of God. To proceed. Whatever meaning we are to attach to the expression “a living soul,” in the second account, must be the meaning of the terms “image and likeness of God,” in the first. Man was made into that “living soul,” or “image and likeness of God,” by the Almighty “breathing into him the breath of life.” But, who was the Almighty that “breathed into him the breath of life?” The Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So do we discover the full force and value of the expression, “Let us make man.” All made him, in the terms of the description: all were concerned in his creation: the Father, who called him into being, and is by reason thereof denominated the Creator: the Word, “by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made—in whom was life; and which life was the light of men:” and the Holy Spirit, by whom man received understanding, and sanctification, and innocence. This is the Scripture interpretation; and it is an interpretation which none but the revealed word of God could have spoken to us, or have made us to comprehend; and we see from it how man was

made an immortal being, with innocence, intelligence, and happiness; immortal in soul; immortal, also, in body, on certain condition, as we are afterwards acquainted.

Much has been said with regard to the expression —“man became a living soul.” Argument has been drawn from it, both for and against the original immortality of man. Because the word “soul” is employed in other parts of the sacred history to signify man, man in his mortal or present character, it has been taken to mean no other than a living person, and so to be applicable to any animate being which has not the superior intelligence of man, as well as to man himself; and, by consequence, we are left entirely without original revealed account of the immortality of man. By others, it has been made to signify the faculty of reason with which he is endued. By others, it is interpreted as the absolute conferring of immortality upon him. The narrowness of the principle, upon which the two former arguments are raised, is self-evident. If we rest on either of them, we are in palpable error, if only, because, rejecting this passage as accounting for the immortality of man, we have no other on which to depend: but, besides this, can we say, that that, call it soul, or what we will, which was breathed by the Creator, and *not made of earth*, would have had a concurrent existence with any thing of earth? We call that mortal, which depends on mortal sustenance; and which, when that mortal sustenance is withdrawn, doth perish; but nothing can depend for

life on mortal sustenance, which is not derived from mortal original: the soul was not derived from mortal original; it was derived from another principle, termed by Moses "the breath of God;" and therefore, when it should become separated from the mortal part, would return to Him from whom it came; and whatever returns to God, we deem immortal: immortality, in truth, is the capacity of returning to God.

In such manner does this passage directly assert the immortality, the primary immortality of man, in a part of him which, for distinction's sake, we call "the Soul." Notwithstanding, we shall not be doing full justice to the passage, if we rest here; we shall not be learning from it, all it is designed we should learn; and we shall be assenting, by inference, to a supposition, that Man was created a living being, before he was created an immortal being; a supposition, for which we have no authority, either from scripture, or from reason. Let us hear what the Commentator<sup>1</sup> says: "*And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.*" This being said of no other creature, leads us to conceive not only that the soul of man is a distinct thing, of a different original from his body; but that a more excellent spirit was put into him by God, (as appears by its operations) than into other animals. For though the simple speech of *inspiring him with the breath of life* would not prove this, yet Moses speaking in the plural number, that God breathed into him *the breath or*

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

*spirit of life*, it plainly denotes not only that Spirit which makes Man *breathe* and *move*, but *think*, also, and *reason*, and *discourse*. *And he became a living soul.* This is the immediate result of the union of the soul with the body. Which Eusebius thus explains—Moses having laid the foundations of Religion before mentioned, viz. The knowledge of God, and of the Creation of the World, proceeds to another point of doctrine most necessary to be understood; which is the knowledge of man's self, to which he leads him by shewing the difference between his soul and his body: his soul being an intelligent substance, made after the image of God; his body, only an earthly covering of the soul. To which Moses adds a third—A certain vital breath, whereby the other two are united and linked together by a powerful band, or strong tie. His soul, it is manifest, did not come out of the earth, or any power of matter; but from the power of God, who infused it into him by his divine inspiration." No distinction as to time, is to be admitted in Man's Creation; and, when we read that he "became a living soul," we learn that he then received his existence in its whole condition and quality. He was made "in the image, and after the likeness" of God, and the process of his creation, was the "breathing into his nostrils the breath of life." Man, *then* "became a living soul." He became endowed with immortality, and every other property, which it was consistent with reason, that an immortal created being should have. He had no life previously to the instant in which this divine life was given to

him: the ground had not been commanded to give any, as in the case of other created beings; whatever life, therefore, he had, was of the direct gift of God. This is the only construction, which will reconcile the matter to our understandings and desires; and it is, likewise, the construction which is most in agreement with the general subject. That men are afterwards called "Souls;" that the word "Soul" is not always confined in its meaning to the immortal part of man, is a mere imperfectness of speech. It is there used to signify the whole man; and we now use it to signify, but the necessarily immortal part of him—his Spirit. Is Scripture, however, to be judged by any various use of ours of the same word? Whatever use may be attached to the word, the being, who was "created in the image, and after the likeness" of God, must have been created with a portion of the divine excellence, and of which immortality was the great, the prominent, and the productive member. The high quality, or property, indeed, with which man was endued, was this of immortality, since, without it, all the rest had been essentially imperfect; and, that wanting immortality, he could not be said to have been "created in the image of God;" there would have been a deficiency in the principal feature; without it, what were all else? they were valueless; they could not have existed. If they could have existed, they would have been a misery to him, and not a happiness. If he had, or could have had, the intelligence he is now master of, and were not immortal, he would be most wretched: knowing that

he must some day utterly perish, what value could he set on, what interest could he take in, the highest goods of life? He would, in real condition, be deeply inferior to the beasts that perish: no sensation of fear or distaste of dissolution, interrupts the satisfaction they have in the conscious enjoyment of existence; they have no faculty or intelligence to speak to them of perishing; though they see death in their own kind, they understand it not; therefore, they tremble not, because of seeing it in others, from apprehension of its approach to themselves. They, then, must err, who would exclude immortality from the meaning of the expression, on which our observation has been fixed; who would not make it an essential part of its meaning; and *we* cannot otherwise than conclude, that the Creator has designed, that we should from hence have information of the immortality of our original nature. The soul breathed into man was immortal, I repeat, *because* it was a breath from God: it was derived from no created substance or being. But, there is a question to be settled, as concerning *the body*. *It* was not immortal in its original, and we know that it was formed from a material substance, and that, as such, it could not have had immortality naturally belonging to it; nor do these verses say, that there was an absolute immortality attached to it. As it was united to the soul, it became so far a partaker of the soul's immortality: it was immortal, or, more properly to speak, undying, so long as that union lasted upon the original terms, or compact established by the Creator. We



must go further for an acquaintance with its actual state. In the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the second chapter, we find it said, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." It is here we learn, what kind and amount of immortality were attached to the body: it was an immortality, an union with the soul, depending on obedience to this injunction. The telling it, that it should die if it were disobedient, was telling it, that it should not die if it were obedient. It was, therefore, made capable of retaining life. But, what was dying? The third chapter informs us, that it was "returning to the dust." The body, then, was conditionally immortal; and, if it should incur the sentence of death, that death would be a "return to the dust." But, God denounced death upon the whole man, if he were disobedient, soul as well as, and conjointly with, the body; nevertheless, the soul could not die by dissolution into dust. It did not come from the dust, and could not go to it. The only death it could suffer was a separation from the body, and a return to the Being from whom it came, to be dealt with by Him according to his righteous judgment. Separation was, indeed, death; it was death, both to soul and body, in an unredeemed state. It was death, in that it was a dissolution of the person or character of man, and a removal from what was his appointed state of

life, and man could not exist as, or be called, man, as body only, or as soul only: the one was as necessary to the character as the other: its mere state of separation was death, a death unto the state in which it was created; and it was death in a further sense, in that the body was dissolved into its original dust, and the soul was removed from a state of enjoyment into a state of wrath.

Thus it is we see what is meant when it is said that man was "created in the image, and after the likeness," of God. He was endued with all divine excellencies which such a being was capable of receiving. He was immortal, intelligent, and innocent. This was man in his creation; and so are we to judge in this important matter. To have right conceptions upon it is necessary, in order to righteousness. This was the state in which we were created, and designed to continue; it is the state from which we are fallen; and a renewal unto it, as far as is possible, being the condition of our recovering the favour of God, and the object of the atonement of Christ, all our efforts should be directed to our immortal state; every ability of our understanding should be used towards it; and lives of innocence should by all means be endeavoured. Let us rightly appreciate the knowledge God has given us. In His revelation is true knowledge, and there it is we must seek it. Careful not to wrest Scripture from its proper meaning; not to undervalue it; not in any way to pervert or misapply it,—we shall study it with reverence and earnestness. If we did not know

from whence, from how high and happy a condition, we are fallen, we should not know for what we were to strive. If we did not know what we once were, we should not have a right notion, either of what we now are, or of what it concerns us to become. Where it is intended we should have knowledge, the Word of God is sufficiently plain. It is so in this case; that is, it is plain enough to inform us what was the original condition of man: as he was "created in the image of God," we have but to acquaint ourselves from Scripture with the attributes of God. I do not say that man was endued with these attributes. Even in his best estate he was as dust and ashes before his Maker. But, knowing the divine attributes, we shall learn what must be the character of the being who should be made in the image of Him that was possessed of them. The breath which He breathed must have been immortal: the qualities which He bestowed must have been pure and true. Hence, then, we understand, that man, made as we are told he was made, was endued with the excellent qualities I have named. If we say he was not endued with them, we impugn the perfectness of God, lowering the direct work of His hands.

Praise we Him for our wondrous creation! Praise we Him for the blessed state in which He made us; for our immortality, and every good connected with it! "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. What is man, that thou art mindful of

him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. —O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Such be our thoughts, and on them be our faith and conduct built; and then our hope will be good of admission hereafter into happiness and glory, perfect and everlasting!

## CHAPTER VIII.

## GENESIS i. 27, 28.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it : and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

FOR Man, “made in the image, and after the likeness,” of God, was designed the dominion or government of the earth ; as, when He was about to create him, said his gracious Creator, “Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” He was constituted lord below ; to him it was, that, in pursuance of this grant, God afterwards “brought every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, to see what he would call them : and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” High, indeed, was this station of man, and most exalted was the benevolence of the Creator in placing him in it. There was no instance of care, of loving-kindness, and of favour, in which defect could be seen. God gave him a world, well

stored with all that was good, and put all things in it at his disposal and to his use. He appointed him supreme sovereign, under Himself: for him, whatever was in existence had been called up—for his service, and his enjoyment: for him even was “the moon appointed for seasons;” for him did “the stars” give their “shining;” and for him did “the sun arise,” and “know also his going down.” “How manifold are the works of the Lord! how in his riches hath he made them all! how is the earth full of his riches!”

Man was made immortal, intelligent, innocent, and happy. He was made, according to these qualities and endowments, in both kinds, male and female; either being equal to the other in dignity of character, inasmuch as either was equally animated by that breath of God which caused man to be “a living soul,” although priority of personal being was necessarily the appointment of the man. Another great and important distinction is herein to be seen, as drawn by the Almighty, between man and other inhabitants of the world. *They* came, at his command, from their material, male and female. Man was made *alone*. Every form and faculty he possessed was specially designed and given him by his Creator. His body was formed, or shaped, from the earth, but still the earth was in his respect a passive instrument; no power had been granted it for production of a being of his destined endowments; it could impart to him neither shape, nor life, nor faculty. God had reserved to himself the exercise of this right and

office. Other animals came perfect in their several kinds from the earth; he was not, it would seem, to have his perfectness from it; he was not, in his real character, to be its creature: he was its creature only as deriving his external covering from its substance. *Therefore* it was, that, when he was made, he stood alone in his kind; and the distinction of sexes, we are told, was not commanded, but was drawn, by the same power that made him. Man, when made, was alone, or comprised the sole immortal being of earth; and from him, in order to be precisely of his own kind, and because that God, having "breathed the breath of life" into one, would not breathe it into another, his "help meet" was taken. She was taken from him, after his entire creation—after he had been formed from the earth, and had "become a living soul by the breathing into him by God of the breath of life;" as St. Paul says, "The woman is of the man," altogether, in his perfect character. She was entirely of his own nature, earthly and spiritually; and hence had their appointments the more indissoluble union. When she was made, or *built*, as the word may be more expressively translated, it was from the rib of man; and, on that account, as being raised from his very substance, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." He immediately perceived that she was essentially part of himself; he was attracted towards her by the sameness of nature; he comprehended the purpose of God in both her formation and the means and manner of it; and so

did he "cleave unto" her. She was immortal, naturally in soul, and conditionally in body, as he was; she was equally "made in the image of God," as we find it written, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Whatever was this image of God, it was attached in its best and fullest signification to either. "Have ye not read," said our blessed Lord, "that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?" Eve received her actual creation in man, when God, having "formed him out of the dust of the ground, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;" and therefore were they in effect male and female at the first, and by this operation both alike "made in the image, and after the likeness," of God. I do not employ this as an unauthorized and imaginative argument.

It is of the same character with one that has been heretofore used by the great apostle of the Gentiles; I mean in that part of his writings where he shews Jesus Christ to be a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and demonstrates the superiority of the Christian over the Levitical Priesthood: "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. *For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him.*" And, is not our mode of argument further justified, lamentably justified, by the corruption which belongs to all men, by reason of the sin of Adam? We are offensive by nature to God, as having been in our



first father's loins when he disobeyed the commandment of God, and incurred the sentence of death. Thus, as we, being derived from him, do partake of his whole nature, so did Eve, as being derived from him, partake of his whole nature too; and, it were an absurdity to suppose, that being derived from him, after, by a certain process, he had "become a living soul," she should not, when divided from him in person, be "a living soul" likewise: no production could be had from him, which was not in his own nature; and that could not be said to be in his nature, which should be wanting in so specially distinctive a point; she, in consequence, received, at her formation, or building up, by the hands of God, the same perfectness of character which had been originally granted by that Mighty Being to himself. When God had in this manner made them, He bestowed his blessing in the following words: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth." He commanded the propagation of their kind, and expressly appointed that dominion which He had before pronounced should be theirs.

To repeat, for better elucidation, in few words, what has been already urged—Man was created "in the image, and after the likeness," of God; *they*, in the language of Scripture, a language which may in this place be followed by us with singular propriety; *they* were "created male and female;" male and

female, in that image, and after that likeness. It was necessary that *they* should be so created, that they might be jointly fitted for the ensuing blessing: "And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." If there had been any difference or inequality of creation, other than in time or sex, between the male and the female; if the one had not been created "in the image, and after the likeness," of God, while the other *was* so created, human kind, in succession, would not have been in compliance with the declared intention: there would have been a deteriorating mixture of nature. In the case of the cattle, and other irrational beings, there was, properly, a procession from the ground of male and female, and they were by that means respectively similar and equal in nature: no other life or faculty was designed for them than what they received from the ground. We see, thus and further, how impossible it was but that woman should be altogether of the nature of man: there could have been no union; in agreement with the stated purposes of God, had there been this essential difference.

I will offer what remarks appear to be necessary upon the words I have just cited,—the words of blessing, as applied to the multiplication of the kind, and the replenishing of the earth,—in the present chapter, and reserve for another consideration the nature and extent of dominion which at creation was bestowed upon man: each subject will give ample scope for separate discussion.

We remark, that man was made *alone* in the world. There was, for a time, no individual person of the same nature besides himself. I assume it to be undoubted, as in the introduction of this part of my undertaking I have insisted, that the whole kind, male and female, was comprehended in the original announcement of the divine will for their creation: the woman being then ordained to be made for the man, the word "man" must be understood to have a plural signification; and, where it is afterwards stated that "God created them male and female," the verity of the statement is in no sense impugned or detracted from, because the sentence in which it is to be found is a summing up of the whole act of creation. In the first place, we are informed that God made man; and, in the next, we are particularly instructed in what man did consist; that he did consist of two parts, male and female. We are now to consider how the woman was created. The first chapter presents us with the fact of her creation; the second with an enlarged account of it, giving some particulars which in the former narration had been necessarily omitted: the first, that man was created, male and female; the second, how, the whole kind having been included in one person, the division into two persons was effected. In all probability, there was but little difference in regard of time; but yet there was, as there must have been, a difference; and therefore, and because the one was taken from the other, there was a priority: "Adam was first formed, and then Eve."

Although Eve was in being, as a member of the whole kind, in the first instance, in her own individual capacity she was not in being; and the apostle, from whom we have the observation, has done well in using the word translated "formed," and not that which signifies "created:," there was no creation after the creation of man "in the image, and after the likeness" of God. It is the account of the second chapter, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man"—he is now speaking of him in the singular number—"should be alone." The work had been incomplete, if the man were alone. His nature and design required fellowship; and the multiplication of his kind was also concerned in the matter. Although this reason appears as given after the actual creation of man, yet we are not to believe that it then presented itself, so to speak, for the first time, to the mind of the Creator; it is, rather, displayed for information; it is stated as an argument wherefore man should not be alone; it was not good; it was not consistent with the grand purpose of his creation; and we learn from it, that that purpose demanded there should be male and female. God formed this "help meet" for man, by "causing a deep sleep to fall upon Adam." Adam was, consequently, made in the completeness of *his* nature before the formation of the woman—"and he slept; and he," that is, God, "took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." So was

Eve formed, and brought unto Adam: he received her as his wife, making use of these words of acceptance: "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Such was the manner of the formation of the woman, and such was the means by which *mankind* was brought to its perfectness; for, it is clear, that the kind was not perfect until the woman was brought to the man. They were now *both* of them as well formed as created, "woman," as the commentator<sup>1</sup> notices, "being in all things like man, only he made out of the earth, and she out of him." This was the main difference.

There has been much dispute as to the precise time in which the woman was formed, whether it was immediately after the creation of man, or whether after man had been established in the garden of Eden, according to the order in which the circumstance is related in the second chapter. I am unable to set the formation of the woman in other time than immediately after the creation of man. The account of the second chapter is, we are to remember, a repetition, and, in considerable instance, an enlargement, of the statements of the first, as this very preface would tell us: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

they were created;" and we may not receive it in order as intended to be exact, because Moses explains and amplifies as he goes on, and his explanation is not so much guided by regard to time as by a design to inform. One instance in point will shew that this suggestion is not incorrect. In the eighteenth verse God says, "It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him." Next to this, and previously to the account or description of the mode in which he produced this "help meet for him," is the history of the giving or assigning of names by Adam, at the command of God, to the fowl, the cattle, and the beast; and, at the end of it we find a statement, "But for Adam there was not found an help meet for him;" and then we have the particular manner in which the woman was formed. Some translators have rendered the word "said," in the eighteenth verse, *had said*; and, if the emendation be right, the matter is easily explained; nor is it at all contradicted by the statement I have quoted, for that seems but to tell us the more strongly of the real formation of the woman, and to mark the difference of her creation, as being equal to that of the man, from the creation of all other animals. Moreover, the declaration of God's will in it, is exhibited directly after the account of the putting of man in the garden of Eden; and we may judge, that the Historian, from the manner in which he introduces this event, would signify, that not only was the man now placed in the garden, and not only to him was

the injunction given not to "eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," but that the woman was there placed together and at the same time with him, and that she was a party, personally, in the receiving of this prohibitory injunction; and he appears to correct himself, as not having before been sufficiently explicit, or to be desirous that all misapplication should be avoided concerning the whole kind, and with this view to recal himself, and to say, "And God *had said*, It is not good that the man should be alone." Having done this, he narrates the incident of the naming of all other animals by Adam, with a re-statement that they were made out of the ground, or from the original earthly mass, and then acquaints us with the formation of the woman. If we ascribe the formation of the woman to a period after the delivery of the injunction not to touch the tree of knowledge, we understand her not to have been included in the threat of it, as of personal denunciation, from the Creator. I do not say that, if it had been so, she would not in fact have been included in it, because she undoubtedly would have been, as being derived from the substance of man, after its delivery; but she must be supposed to have received her knowledge of it from him: and this is a supposition not at all warranted by Scripture; the contrary, indeed, is to be inferred from the words which passed between herself and the serpent—"Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the

garden ; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." She speaks of her own knowledge ; and the most scrupulous criticism would not judge otherwise : there is nothing to cause us to think that the injunction to her was not immediate from God. Besides, there can be no doubt that man was placed in the garden on the day of his creation : the whole of God's works were performed within six days, and the planting of that garden was of the work of one of them. In truth, there is reason to believe that it was planted on the third day ; but that is a point more fitly to be entered upon when we come to consider the particular subject to which it belongs, and I will indulge in no anticipatory remarks. And, again, Adam, we may suppose, named the other animals at the time he received his grant of dominion ; and that grant was made, after man was created, male and female. If we have to take the account of the second chapter as an account of exact order, we shall be obliged to set much of the work of creation after the seventh day, which would be manifest error. We, then, for all these reasons, do conclude that, where it is said, God created man, male and female, he created them and formed them on the sixth day, in either kind. We are to take the account of the first chapter as an account of exact order ; and the naming of the irrational animals will be therefore made to have occurred after the division into the kinds of male and female ; for that must, as I have said, have been after the as-



signment of dominion over them : it was in itself an exercise of dominion ; it was a claim of authority ; and, as the assignment was unto both, they must both have been in full previous existence and formation ; and the placing of them in the garden of Eden must have happened thereafter, that is, when the grant of “ the herb bearing seed,” and of the “ tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed,” was delivered ; otherwise, we should have two separate grants of food the same in kind ; what, I presume, no one will contend for.

This matter being made so far clear, I will offer some few and brief remarks upon the words of the former part of the blessing which God now pronounced on the man and the woman : “ Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” It was the design of God, from the beginning, to fill the earth with the species of man whom he had at that time created, the expression “ replenish the earth” shewing that there was no part of it in which mankind were not fitted to have their dwelling and sustenance. To “ replenish the earth” must be a work of very lengthened time : God, notwithstanding, made it at once capable of containing all the inhabitants which it was appointed on its most distant day to possess. He did not produce just so much as should be required for first use, and leave the future supply to the call of future necessity. He created the whole together, since the power of creation was not a second time, in the material world, to be manifested. Useless, then, as we may conceive so much of our globe

to be ; unoccupied, waste, and even barren, as it appears to our sight, yet are we to believe that the time will arrive when all shall be in requisition and service. God created man, as we have seen, male and female ; and He gave them the power of multiplication in the blessing he delivered : “ God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Without this blessing, they had been without this power : it ordained, likewise, to their descendants the same nature and privileges which they themselves held and enjoyed : in them, it was vouchsafed unto all men ; and thus did God “ make of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and determine the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” Had Adam and Eve continued in the innocence in which they were made, innocence in their kind would have been perpetuated ; as was the root so would have been the branches ; both would have been holy before the Lord, and blessed, without interruption, through everlasting generations. All were created, on the day that God made man, all being visible to the eternal eye, “ in the image, and after the likeness ” of God ; and, if the parent stream had retained its purity, all that flowed from it would have been equally pure. This blessing of multiplication satisfies us that God never designed that Adam and Eve should be the sole occupiers of the earth ; it decides to us the fact, that his wisdom and omniscience both designed and beheld, at the beginning, the creation of all men. He had, truly, we may readily under-

stand, never made so large a world for the service of these two : He had never given so extensive a dominion to them, if He had not determined that they should increase into a sufficient number for the due and full exercise of it. He had not designed for them, as solitary individuals, all the herb and fruit of the ground ; we are, therefore, plainly bound to acknowledge, that the countless millions of our race were then present to *his* sight, unto whom “ all things are naked and opened ;” who seeth the things that are not, and calleth by their names things which have yet to be ; and we are satisfied, that we were all of us intended to be born in purity, and fixed in happiness ; and that it would have been so, if sin had not entered, and blotted the fair prospect. “ By man sin entered into the world, and death by sin :” God called not death—he made it not : it was not of him.

The multiplication of man was appointed in this blessing, by which we likewise learn, that we were originally destined to be born into the world by the will of God, and that we were created for the service of God. Other animals were created for the service of man. To no created beings, not even to angels, was granted authority over him : the Lord alone was his King. This very circumstance gave proof of man’s superior destiny. In all creation, in the whole and every distinct part of it, there was a purpose. For man were all other living beings and things of the world created and formed ; and for whom was he created and formed but for the Almighty Creator himself ? God’s

own divine blessing rested upon him ; and no intervening government was suffered to exist.

In all this we have abundant cause for praise and adoration of our Creator. On every step we take, in the consideration of the work of his hands, we find fresh demands on our wonder, and our piety, and our thankfulness. Benevolence was the ruling principle and is the prominent feature : every provision was appointed for the happiness of his creatures ; every care was exhibited for security of their well-being : in no point was there defect. What happiness might have been man's, if he had continued in his obedience ! how blessed would he have been in his condition ! happy in himself, happy in all about him ! with a world, beautiful and glorious, made for him ; and in his own original kind blessed and perfect ! And, let us not fail to remark, how blessed in his parental character ; witnessing in his fellow-creatures, in creatures sprung, by God's ordinance, from himself, nought but innocence and happiness also ! This had constituted a blessing of exalted rank, and of inestimable value : it had made and continued earth a paradise, and elevated men in feeling very near to the angels of God. Unfortunately, it became otherwise : and now, being by nature corrupt, the multiplication of our kind draws with it many anxieties, and troubles, and evils. Still, it is designed for, and may be made a blessing ; since, if we will only, in dependence on the grace of God, exert so much of good as yet remains in us, it will become a means of great comfort and satisfaction. Though

we are fallen, God's will is before us, and we may, by pursuing the path He has pointed out to us, to large extent perform it: if we do so, the blessing of the original words will in their possible signification be ours. They were intended to convey a blessing: there was no intention that man should have misery in his offspring; and, if he do have misery in them, it is in a very considerable degree a misery of his own procuring. We have the means, within and about us, of making all the dispensations of the Almighty work for our good; and if, by neglect or wilfulness on our part, they work otherwise, to ourselves will be attributable every misfortune, and suffering, and sorrow, which from them may seem to happen unto us.

## CHAPTER IX.

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GENESIS i. 28.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing that moveth upon the earth.

THE nature and extent of the dominion bestowed upon man at his creation, is, in our proposed order, the subject of the present chapter. The Creator, when He signified his pleasure that man should be made, declared, at the same time, that it was one part of his intention in him that he should have dominion over the earth, and over all things that were in it, in the air, and in the sea; and, now that the work of his creation is actually effected, we find this dominion assigned in express and personal grant. In the former instance it had been said, "Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."—In the latter

the words are, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." The earth and its contents were thus subjected to man's power and use: to him, likewise, a being whose proper habitation was of the earth, and to which he was naturally attracted, not only was it, with all that was in it, in such manner assigned, but the occupants of those other elements also, the air and the water, were included in the grant of authority. The command over his own more especial element was not alone given to man, but a power, besides, in those other two, for habitation in which his body was not framed, and which, at first view, both in themselves and their occupants, would seem to defy any exertion of him to penetrate into, in visible or other control. The earth was placed at his disposal; he was directed and enabled to "subdue it;" the inhabitants of it were appointed to be under his authority, and for his service; the fish of the sea were brought within his dominion; and the fowl of the air were made obedient to his call. There is a remarkable distinction in the arrangement and terms of this grant, which we shall do well here to observe. Man is commanded and capacitated to "subdue" the earth equally as to "have dominion" over all things within it; but, as concerning the other elements named, the air and the water, no similar command is issued, or power bestowed; his dominion there is permitted

to extend no further than to their occupants; themselves were to remain subject to their Creator. It never was designed that the will or power of man should in any wise direct *them*. He was endued with no capacity to that purpose. The earth he could, in the language of Scripture, "subdue," or by cultivation apply to his service and enjoyment; the occupants of it, and of the sea, and of the air, some by the force of his physical strength, and others by the working and ingenuity of his mind, he could subject to himself; but the sea he could make neither to rage, nor to be calm; the winds and the rain he could not order. God reserved in his own hand the power to "give rain upon the earth, and to send waters upon the fields;" to "cause the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; to make lightnings for the rain; and to bring the wind out of his treasures; he hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which they shall not pass;" He "established the clouds above; he strengthened the fountains of the deep; he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment." He set a limit to the authority of his creature—Man, and so taught him dependence on Himself. The authority man possessed was by delegation and of gift: it was not inherent; he had it not until God gave it him; nor could he use it otherwise than was the design or endowment of Him from whose sole will and bounty it came. Man's power, then, or the dominion which was granted to him, was confined to the subjecting of the earth, in its fore-



ordained capacity and purpose, to his use and pleasure, and to the bringing of all other living creatures into the fear and obedience of him. The earth was subject to him ; he was enabled to subdue it. God had produced from the earth, as well as the irrational animals, “ the grass, the herb yielding seed; and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed was in itself;” and He had vouchsafed to it the property of continuing the production of them in constant and perpetual succession ; but, while He had so ordained, as all was for the eventual service and advantage of man, he willed *Him* to have a power of controlling it in the regulation of its fruit. When He put him into the garden of Eden, it was, amongst other purposes, that he should “ dress it, and keep it;” and the dressing and keeping it imported a dominion over the ground of it ; for, although nothing was to be or could be produced in other method than according to the order and course which the Creator by His original decree had made natural, still was the production in great measure dependent on the care of him to whom was intrusted the charge of dressing and keeping it. This remark, as to the appointment of Adam in the garden of Eden, may be taken in general reference to the whole earth in its first condition and design ; and, relatively, in its later and present. The ground would require the alternation of seasons, it would require the warmth of the sun, and the refreshment of showers from the heavens ; yet was man, by his endowments, enabled so to work it to his purposes

and wants, so by cultivation to reduce it to a subserviency to him; so to receive its proceeds and convert them to his use, that he did in truth exercise a very extensive and important dominion. Doubtless, this dominion, in the beginning, and before the fall, was far more perfect than it is now; the application, or exercise, or assertion of it, did not demand the labour, did not necessitate the pains, did not raise the anxieties, and was not attended with the uncertainties, or followed by the disappointments, which have since lowered its worth, and deteriorated from its gratifications; notwithstanding, who does not see, with even all these disadvantages and contractions, how effectually man governs the earth, under the supreme control and directing providence of God? how, when he cultivates it, it brings forth, not any mere natural produce of its own, but the produce of the principle or seed which *he* sows? how he adapts it to himself; how he causes it to obey, as it were, his command; how he compels it to serve to his desire and to what might sometimes be called almost to his caprice? Who does not see, how, digging into its bowels, he forces out its hidden treasures to his wish; that there is no part of it which he does not turn in some way to his service; that he gains from it metals, gold, and silver, and iron, and brass; that the very stones of it furnish him with the material of his dwelling, and other essential objects, or what he deems to be essential; and, where these fail, that he converts itself into stone, making it to supply its own deficiency? All this

large and wondrous capacity of application to man's service was derived from the command and endowment contained in the original blessing; in consequence of that the earth has become man's own, and he exercises it at his pleasure.

"Have dominion over the fish of the sea." What vast power did the Creator manifest in putting this portion of the works of creation under the dominion of a being, whose habitation, as has been already observed, was of another and an opposite element, and whose nature seemed to unfit him for the exercise of it! But, no difficulties or apparent contrarieties can stand in the way of the divine intention; and that is easy to the Creator, which, to the conception of the creature, may be altogether impracticable. He has only to command, or to will, and that is done which He commands or wills; His will is omnipotent; it is sufficient to all things. As it was of and through it that all things were created, so was it of the office of it, to dispose, to endow, to assign. This would appear to be an impracticable appointment; yet, has it been so? Have the words of the blessing been uttered in vain? They have been verified in their most enlarged meaning, and the appointment of them is abundantly realized. Man does exercise a true and effectual dominion over the fish of the sea; he does subdue them; he does put "the fear" of him upon them; and it is by means of the superior intellect of which he was at his creation made possessed. They cannot escape him; the waters, their dwelling, are no ultimate hindrance to his will, when

his desire is fixed on them. God would give him no fruitless gift, no barren endowment ; and, when He pronounced that he should have a dominion over the fish of the sea, He intended, as He thereafter brought to pass, to grant him the powers of mind that should be requisite for the due exercise of it ; and, therefore, he has them. There is none, vast, and bulky, and strong as it may be, which he cannot master, if he so determine ; swiftness of motion even, the faculty of lightly skimming the surface, of riding on the wave, or plunging into the depth, does not prevent him ; by “understanding” he conquers in the points in which they are more powerful than himself. But, can he also ascend into the air, in his power ? Can he maintain an authority in it, and bring its occupants within the reach of his hands ? Can he mount thither, as he can go down into the deep, and seize them in his sovereignty, that make the clouds their refuge, and fly on the wind ? Over these, too, can he triumph ? Assuredly, he can ; he does ; *for*, of them, said the omnipotent Creator to him, “Have dominion over the fowl of the air.” He cannot tempt their element, traversing it as he traverses the seas ; it gives him not a pathway, as do the waters ; but, nevertheless, the fowl that rise into it, flying out of his sight, do not so avoid his grasp. Here again, we say, God gave them to him ; and God’s gift will ever carry with it justification of its reality. Simple as from use and habit may seem to us the ways by which we enforce our right of dominion over these creatures, so admirable were they in their first contrivance or

discovery, as to evince that it was from a divinely gifted mind the faculty of it was drawn. What but it could satisfy us that they were ours, and would obey us? What but it, that no subtilty of theirs would avail in lasting resistance against us? No inferior conviction, truly; and the fact of our holding of this power, shews it to have been of God. It may not immediately appear so wonderful that "every living thing that moveth upon the earth" should have been placed under the dominion of man, as that the fish and the fowl should have been put in subjection to him. His dominion here does not seem, I say, to be so much out of natural order: the objects of it inhabit the same element with himself; they cannot go where he is unable personally to follow them: when, however, we come to consider the superior bodily strength of many of them over the utmost bodily strength of mankind, their overwhelming force, and fearful appearance, their greater numbers, and the consummate craft by which some of them are distinguished, it will be seen to be no less so. Do we not restrain the fiercest? Do we not curb the most violent? Do we not hold the strongest under our command? Do we not entrap the most suspicious and crafty? Do we not so draw them to our service, that we mould them to our will, and make them feel that their dependence is upon us? Can they rise in concerted or fore-thought opposition? If in this latter point they had a capacity, they would speedily cause our destruction; and it is by His arrangement in the denial to them of it, that the

Almighty has confirmed our dominion. They are helpless against us, because it is only an individual and unjudging quality which they have, whether it be of strength, or of swiftness, or whatever else. There is with them no combined action, while, by his excellent intelligence, all man's species do act in accordant movement against the irrational creation. Marvellous and gracious in these things are the wisdom and goodness of God. When he gave man a dominion in his world, He determined that nothing should thwart or stay it; and where in any point the consistency of His own general design made it necessary that an inferior creature should be possessed of a more external force, He neglected not to supply *him* with some counterbalancing superiority, by which he might conquer it, and so both protect himself, and subdue that of which he had been constituted the master. Thus did God make man "to have dominion over the works of His hands; thus did he put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea;" as in his creation he purposed him to have "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth;" and as at the subsiding of the waters of the flood, he said to Noah and to his sons, "And the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that

moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea."

I do not now propose to enter into a particular discussion or to state a more detailed opinion of the subject of animal food, whether the permission of it is comprised within the meaning of this grant, or not. That subject will be introduced with greater regularity and advantage in an after-place. I may, however, say so far as that I believe it is not comprised in it; and, in brief notice of any who would insist that we use animal food in consequence and by authority of it, as being the original grant of dominion, I observe, that, admitting we do, it is not in consequence of its first design and terms, but, from the extension which God afterwards saw fit to allow in consideration of altered circumstance. There are many uses in which the inferior animal creation is subservient to us besides that one of food; and, in order even to them, this grant of dominion was requisite; nor is it otherwise than of reasonable belief, that, in the first state of the world, before man had become corrupt in his nature, there were uses which have since been lost, or which have ceased to be compatible with his later and deteriorated state. In addition, let me remark, that, as we are created beings, we cannot call any thing our own, we cannot exercise a power over any thing, without the consent of Him who is its Lord and ours. All is God's, in right of creation; and, neither could we have pretended to power of control, nor would it have been suffered by Him, over any, the most insignificant

part of creation, without His purpose and licence. This sentence, conferring dominion, is our warrant of rule : it justifies the authority we claim, defining its extent, and making it of effect as proceeding from Him who only could grant it, and from whom proceeding what none can successfully or harmlessly dispute.

The earliest exercise of this dominion, of which we have record, is that of the giving of names to the animals by Adam : “ And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them : and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field.” This was an open demonstration to the world of the endowment with which God had in this instance blessed man ; it was a plain and formal announcement, that he, who was empowered to give names to the inferior creatures, declaring their characters and qualities, and marking the difference of their respective natures, was he to whom a positive dominion over them had been assigned. The name of Adam was, we may presume, given of the will of the Creator, as in remembrance of the origin of his material part from the earth, and as exhibiting him, in his delegated power over the earth, as the representative before God of the material and lower world. ‘ Let us make man,’ that is, Adam, are God’s words ; and God was *his* Lord ; Adam gave



name to Eve, saying, "She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man"—and he "called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living"—and woman was placed by the Almighty in subjection unto man. It is the expression—"he brought them"—the beast and the fowl—"unto Adam to see what he would call them;" by which it has been suggested that God desired "to exercise and improve his understanding<sup>1</sup>." I cannot assent to the suggestion, man being, on the instant of his coming from the hands of his Creator, as perfect in understanding as his nature admitted; and this fact is rather a proof of the excellence, than of any step in the improvement, of his understanding. I can only receive the sentence as purporting that the animals were brought unto Adam to be named, a construction which is borne out by what next follows: "And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." It was the clearness of his understanding which enabled him to name them. The object was the giving of names; and not a mere exercise of the ingenuity of Adam. It was, in its full effect, the formal delivery, and the first consequent assertion, of power. It was the ostensible placing of the various members of the irrational animal creation to his proper disposal; it was the external means of appointing him their Lord; the sealing of the grant of dominion. By this act they were confessedly under his power, God

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

Himself presenting him in it as His vicegerent; they seemed themselves to offer him acknowledgment, and to do him homage; they then received a "fear" of him, which in its principle thenceforward continued, became his subjects, yielding themselves in submissive appropriation to the uses for which he might require them.

That in the beginning the irrational animals rendered to man a more willing and full obedience than they have since rendered, is as true as that the earth, in its primal and uncursed state, gave and could not but give a better product than has been since had from it. Indeed, we may easily conceive that the dominion over either one suffered by the fall in similar manner and in equal degree. The earth, though it is still made to obey us, does resist; it is by a sort of compulsion that it gives us of its fruit. So, likewise, with the irrational animals. They cause us trouble; they oftentimes occasion us disappointment as the earth opposes our wishes, and does not always give us a product agreeably to what we may think a just expectation. It is, therefore, to be concluded, that the obedience, which they originally yielded to man, was as willing and peaceful as we believe the fruit of the ground to have been ready and adequate to his desire of it. There was no imperfection; and that could not have been called a perfectness of dominion, according to its intention, where so strong a resistance should have prevailed as is at present seen. We can subdue the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and the beast of the field,

but we are not free from danger and suffering in the contest; we can subdue the earth, but it is by "the sweat of the brow," by the undergoing of labour and toil, and weariness and pain. *It* brings forth "thorns and thistles," as *they* so frequently inflict wounds and death. There is the same relative deterioration, and, being so, we may judge that the perfectness of the original dominion over either was relatively the same too. As the earth was perfectly in obedience to man, so were the animals. He did not fear them; he had no dread of their strength, or their violence. He was their Lord; and they, by their immediate submission, recognized the justness of his authority. Thus was the earth subject to man; thus were all the occupants of it, small and great, weak and powerful, and of whatsoever kind, placed under his dominion; and, with them, also, the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air<sup>1</sup>. They minis-

<sup>1</sup> But especially (that which as reason enables us, and prompts us especially to observe) there is an evident regard (so evident, that even Pliny, a professed Epicurean, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the prince of creatures visible; they being all as on purpose ordered to yield tribute unto him; to supply his wants, to gratify his desires; with profit and pleasure to exercise his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curiosity. All things about us do minister (or at least may do so, if we would improve the natural instruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preservation, ease, or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treasures of metals, and minerals, quarries of stone and coal, so necessary, so serviceable to divers good uses, that we could not commodiously be without them; the vilest and most common

tered to him ; they obeyed his will, bending to his wishes ; in him they beheld their superior, and with-

stones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are useful, and serve to many good purposes beside : the surface of the earth how is it bespread all over, as a table well furnished, with variety of delicate fruits, herbs, and grains, to nourish our bodies, to please our tastes, to cheer our spirits, to cure our diseases ! How many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themselves for the comfort of our smell, and the delight of our sight ! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood breeds a quire of natural musicians, ready to entertain them with easy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I say, which, also adorned with stately trees, afford us a pleasant view and a refreshing shade, shelter from weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houses and our shipping ; with divers other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary to the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourse among us. Yea, the wide seas are not (altogether unprofitable) wastes ; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvests, transmitting our commerce and traffic, furnishing our tables with stores of dainty fish, supplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refresh the earth, being inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived ; the very rude and boisterous winds themselves fulfil God's word, (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be so,) by yielding manifold services to us ; in brushing and cleansing the air for our health, in driving forward our ships, (which without their friendly help could not stir,) in gathering together, in scattering, in spreading abroad the clouds—the clouds, those paths of God, *which drop fatness* upon our fields and pastures. As for our living subjects, all the inferior sorts of animals, it is hardly possible to reckon on the manifold benefits we receive from them ; how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food and convenient clothing, how they ease our labour, how they promote even our recreation and sport. Thua

stood not in any respect his desire. This was their first condition; this was the design concerning them of the benevolent Creator; this was the arrangement by which He provided for the comfort and welfare of all. Wisdom and goodness were the marked features of it, as they are of every work, and of every dispensation, which He has directed and ordained.

have all things upon the earth, (as is fit and seemly they should have) by the wise and gracious disposal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its noblest inhabitant, most worthy and most able to use them : many of them have an immediate reference to man, (as necessary to his being, or conducive to his well-being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill, or labour,) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reasonable to suppose; I mean such things, whose usefulness doth in part depend upon the exercise of our reason, and the instruments subservient thereto : for what is useful by the help of reason, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to sense refers to a thing merely sensitive : we may, therefore, for instance, as reasonably suppose that iron was designed for our use, though first we be put to dig for it, then must employ many arts, and much pains before it become fit for our use; as that the stones were therefore made, which lie open to our view : and which, without any preparation, we easily apply to the pavement of our streets, or the raising of our fences : also, the grain we sow in our ground, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reason to conceive as well provided for us, as those plants which grow wildly and spontaneously; for that sufficient means are bestowed on us of compassing such ends, and rendering those things useful to us, (a reason able to contrive what is necessary thereto, and a hand ready to execute,) it being also reasonable, that something should be left for the improvement of our reason, and employment of our industry, lest our noblest powers should languish and decay by sloth, or want of fit exercise.—BARROW.

## CHAPTER X

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GENESIS i. 29, 30.

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

WHEN the Almighty Creator had thus made man, and had thus given him blessing and dominion, He next, as the inspired Historian informs us, assigned to him food and sustenance; at the same time declaring, that He had also assigned their food and sustenance to all living creatures besides, which had been produced, and which then existed on the face of the earth. This grant was made on the day of their creation; on the sixth day; man and beast having both been created on it, the latter before the former; but, the grant to man is the first spoken of, in all likelihood for the purpose of yet further proclaiming his superiority and dominion. Nothing, we may remark, is said of the grant of food to the

creatures whose habitation was in the waters, neither was it requisite: their very instinct would point out what was proper for them, and that we are to understand was the means by which God spoke to them; and there were no creatures between whom and themselves in this respect any distinction was to be drawn. The irrational animals on the earth and in the air, would in like manner have understood what was their intended sustenance; God, I say, we may conceive, had spoken to them in like manner, by their instinct; but, as they were inhabitants of the same portion of the globe with man, it was necessary that man should be ascertained of the property of either: the words are, therefore, addressed to him, teaching him what was his assignment of food, and what was theirs; telling him what God had done, and what He was about to do. He was informed, as visible Lord of the lower creation; and he was informed because his food was not so much of instinct, as of grant and command. God spoke to *them* by their appetites, to *him* by his reason and faith; for, both reason and faith were parties in the receiving of the communication, the propriety of the assignment and the power and goodness of the Grantor being equally acknowledged. The visible portion of man had been formed from the earth—a material substance; and it was fit that the support of it should be drawn from that its original. This was consonant with truest reason. He had been made to consist of two parts, body and soul, earthly and spiritual. The soul had not, could not have depen-

dence on materiality ; and the assignment of food, which is related in this place, concerns only the support of the body, the present tenement or habitation of the soul ; to which it was actually united, and to which it would have continued inseparably united, but for the offence which caused the condemnation of the body again to the dust, and of it to him from whom it was given. It is clear, from this passage, that it was the divine intention, that man should never cease to regard his body as otherwise than material. Even, if we had no account of the threat which was denounced on disobedience, the threat of dissolution, we must still from hence have derived the materiality of the visible members. The granting of food implies the necessity of support from without, the incapacity of the subject to maintain itself by its own inherent powers ; and, it is an essential characteristic of materiality to need extraneous support in order to the preservation of its life and form. It is a belief, to which we have been instructed, that, if man had not sinned, he would not have become subjected to death ; here, therefore, lest it should be urged, that the assignment of food from the beginning, for the support of material life, implies an even then necessary subjection to death, I will just observe, that, if man had not corrupted his nature, he would not have violated the commandment of God in any instance ; and that, although the support of his material life depended to a certain degree on his application to the means which were ordained for it, he would, so long as he continued



innocent, be led to those means by what may be called an irresistible impulse. He could not have kept himself back from them without offence, that is, without being in a state of sin; and, thus, can no argument against the Scripture account be drawn from this circumstance. God had not bestowed necessary immortality on man's body; and, on this ground, support was essential, and it could not refuse the means of it:—

— whatever was created  
Needs to be sustained and fed.—MILTON.

The assignment, of which I am speaking, was delivered in the following words: “Behold, I have given you every green herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” Hence it appears, that plants and fruits were the food appointed to man. The next verse declares the food of that branch of the irrational animal creation, described as inhabiting the earth and the air: “And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and,” says the conclusion “it was so.” The expression in this sentence is “green herb” only, omitting the words “bearing seed,” and not followed by those—“every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed”—the fruit or product of the herb and tree

being designed for man, and the growing grass or herb for the other. There is a very remarkable distinction in these two appointments. The food of man we see to have been ordained of the fruits of the plants and trees bearing seed; the food of the irrationals, of the green herb and the grass. All had at that time sprung from the earth on the commandment of the Creator, and was in a kind of spontaneous perfection; but the herb and the grass would still maintain a spontaneous growth sufficient to their purpose. I do not lead to the inquiry, for, it is a subject on which we cannot certify ourselves, how far, and in what respects, antecedently to the fall, or on a supposition that the fall had not occurred, man's care had been necessary, or, more properly to speak, had been ordained to be applied. It was, manifestly, no part of God's intention, that man should lead a life of inactivity, He having given him a mind and body well adapted to useful occupation, although He did not intend that he should earn his bread by "the sweat of his brow;" but, the distinction of food now made, the fruits or product of the plants and the trees being appointed to man, shews that it was intended he should cultivate them, or, as is afterwards said, in the mention of the garden of Eden, "dress and to keep" his ground. The distinction of these two kinds yet continues; that is man's food which demands cultivation, and there is no part of it which without cultivation will not deteriorate; and the seemingly spontaneous productions of the earth, are yet suffi-

cient to the irrational inhabitants of it. Man does, in truth, for his own purposes of better utility in them, cultivate even for many of them ; but, such cultivation is not necessary to their subsistence, and is only employed to meet the incidents of the artificial state into which he has brought them, a state evidently not contemplated before the passing of the curse on the ground.

There is another observation I would make, concerning a portion of this subject on which opinions are not agreed. God had granted to man a dominion over all cattle, and other beings, and He now appoints food both to him and to them : this food does not by name include the flesh of animals ; it specially, I may say carefully, confines itself to plants, trees, and herbs : but some persons are not contented with what would be a simple interpretation ; finding, on the instant after the fall, “ coats of skins,” as is the expression, made for Adam and Eve ; and finding Abel sacrificing animals to the Lord, they presume that under the preceding grant of dominion, not regarding the restricted appointment of food in this place, not regarding it as *the* and the sole appointment, the grant of animal flesh is contained : others, contented with the plain sense of Scripture, and believing that this direct appointment invalidates the supposition of any previous and indirect appointment, argue that no such grant is therein contained. Unquestionably, without very considerable violence to the scriptural text, a grant of animal food may not be supposed. Assignment of dominion does not of

necessity infer an assignment of food : the nature of man might be fitted for the former, but not for the latter. The word "dominion," in this instance, can only mean that kind and extent of dominion which was suited to the circumstances of the case ; and the grant of animal food does not appear to be in any way suitable to them. Man's nature was then very different from that which it became after the fall : it required not, it desired not, animal food : the product of the ground bounded both necessity and desire, and had a character and influence which it afterwards lost. What was produced before the curse passed on the earth,—before, with it, it "brought forth thorns and thistles," we may safely say was very different from what was produced from the earth upon which the curse had passed, and whose nature it had now become to "bring forth thorns and thistles." Arguing in this manner, we affirm, that the ordinary product of the ground was sufficient for the purpose of sustenance ; and, as no mention is made of animal food in this place, and express mention of it is made in another, as a then grant, we are to believe that the first authority to use it was at the time of that grant, namely, after the flood, to Noah and his sons. There is an endeavour to prove a grant of animal food, previously to the grant to Noah and his sons, from the fact, that on the commission of the sin which caused the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, God made them "coats of skins." They, who rest on this as authority for their position, at once assume, that the original words mean skins drawn

from the bodies of animals, an interpretation which is not universally admitted. They may mean coats for the bodies of the persons for whom they were made; they may mean coats drawn from the fleeces of the animals; and, if even they do mean coats made of skins, as it is most probable they do, still is no authority derivable for the use of animal food. Animals might have been commanded to be slain for this very purpose of clothing, and at the same time to shew how the sentence of death had begun to operate, together with the further intention of sacrifice; and these skins might have been designed as a reminder to the parties themselves of the sentence which had passed on them, and its coming execution. "The first clothes of mankind," says the commentator,<sup>1</sup> "were of the leaves of trees, which they made themselves; being ready at hand, woven by divine art. The next were of the skins of beasts, which were much warmer; and better able to defend them from the injury of cold and weather: and these were made by God's direction. Who, having made a most gracious covenant with our first parents, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that He also signified to them, they should, for the confirmation of it, offer to him sacrifices, by the blood of which, covenants were ratified in after times, from this example. For it is not likely that the beasts, of whose skins these coats were made, died of themselves; or that they were killed merely for their use, or for

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

their food. And therefore what is so probable, as that, by God's order, they were slain for a sacrifice to Him, (the better to represent to them their guilt, and that the promised seed should vanquish the Devil, and redeem them by shedding his blood,) and that of the skins of those beasts God directed coats to be made, to clothe them?" If the interpretation of the words "coats of skins" be skins drawn from the bodies of animals, we cannot do better than take, in the main, this comment for our guide. Reasoning thus, it is evident that animals were not slain, either for sacrifice or for clothing, before the fall: they could not have been slain for sacrifice, there being nothing to prefigure; they were not slain for clothing, as it is recorded that none was in use; and, if they had been slain for either sacrifice or food, the first clothing would rather have been of them than of the leaves of trees: we are, therefore, necessitated to conclude that no grant of animals for food had hitherto been made. With respect to those who would draw their argument from the sacrifice of Abel, our answer is ready and short. From Abel's sacrifice, it is indisputable, that God commanded the shedding of blood as prospective and figurative of the sacrifice thereafter to be offered. While Abel sacrificed animals, Cain offered of the fruits of the ground. Abel's sacrifice of blood shewed the faith in which it was presented: Cain's sacrifice, as though he would *give* an offering; he sacrificed of the fruits, which was an offering of a portion of his subsistence, as if conceiving that God required something from him, as for itself:

Abel sacrificed that which was not in the same degree a portion of his subsistence; and so did not appear to be offering so costly a gift as the other. Here lay the difference between the two. Abel offered in faith of the future propitiation—Cain offered in repayment of the fruits which the ground had produced him. The one would recompense God; the other would acknowledge the insufficiency of whatever he should offer up, the inadequacy of all, until the full oblation. So then, it would seem, that the fact of Abel's offering of animals is argument against rather than in favour of a supposition of the grant of animal food having been made previously to the permission signified after the flood.

It may be, in accordance with the opinions of writers on this subject, that animal food was used previously to the flood: it is, indeed, probable, that it was; but, if it were, it was not in consequence of any expressed permission from God. It is likewise probable, that the use of it was suggested by sacrifice; by the perversion of it I should say; that men corrupted the appointment into an occasion of gratifying the depravity of appetite. I doubt, however, whether any who served God in truth, Noah and his family, used it before the flood: I doubt, whether it were used by other than those who had filled the earth with violence, and made it corrupt, and I ground myself upon the concluding passage of the command issued to Noah, to fashion and to fill the ark. God had commanded him to carry with him and his family into the ark, two of all living

creatures, in these words: "And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive." After this, He says, "And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee and for them." These words would tell us, that the food here spoken of was the only lawful food of man; more particularly, when we find an after-grant of animal food delivered in express words. When the waters of the flood had subsided, a special grant of animal food is made; and it is so presented as to inform us that this was the original grant. If it had been otherwise, why should it have been then renewed? or why should the mention of it have been omitted before? There was no renewal of the grant of the plant and the tree; but, this is stated to have been given in equal measure with them. All this, too, is confirmed by the restriction as to the blood, under which it is directed to be used. We should bear in mind, that Noah had already shed blood: he had sacrificed of clean and of unclean beasts—an important fact, inasmuch as it shews that the sacrifice of animals, and the eating of their flesh, were not necessarily connected. The words of the grant are as follow: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the



green herb have I given you all things." This ought to be considered as decisive of the question.

A reason has been alleged for the not previously granting to mankind the use of animal food, which does not seem to me to be admissible, while to my own mind one of a higher character is more obvious, and far more consonant with the circumstances. The alleged reason presumes, that, the stock of irrational animals in each kind being in the beginning of the world but small, it would have been injured by premature application of it as food. This, nevertheless, is seen to be no reason at all, when we consider that on the instant after the flood the number was very little beyond that which it was on the instant after creation, but two of each kind having been preserved in the ark; and, it is absurd to suppose that the stock of any part of them was in much greater danger of extermination or diminution while there were yet but two persons of mankind on the earth, than at the time when there were eight, Noah and his wife, their three sons and their wives. The proper reason is to be sought in the innocence and holiness of man, in the uncursed state of the earth. It was inconsistent with either, that blood should be shed; and this view is established to us by the prohibition, which follows the grant, of eating the blood: "But the flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." God would not permit man, in whom was an immortal spirit, to be sustained by "the life" of one of his creatures:

that were an abomination to Him; and, even when all had been deteriorated, the cattle, and the fowl, and the creeping things, we are to believe, as well as the product of the ground, God had still so much regard for this first principle, that He annexed the prohibition of blood to his grant of the new kind of food. Some, truly, and amongst them many of the early Hebrews, construe the sentence, as though the prohibition does but concern the eating of flesh taken from the yet living animal; and they endeavour to strengthen their supposition by urging that the practice has been found to prevail in parts of the world. It has, undoubtedly, prevailed, but only with the most barbarous of people; and I take this sentence as giving no warranty for the construction; for, what does it say?—"Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Ye shall not eat the life, which is the blood; and, the direction of later times to the Israelites proves that it was the blood to which the prohibition had respect. They were directed to pour it on the ground; and they constantly did so. They were exact in abstaining from it; and the command to them that they should abstain, with this prohibition, may be received as the safest construction of the passage which is to be had. "The simplest sense" (says our Commentator before referred to) "seems to be, that they should not eat the blood of any creature: which was a positive precept, like that of not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the reason of it, perhaps, was, that God intending in after times

to reserve the blood, for the expiation of sin, required this early abstinence from it, that they might be the better prepared to submit to that law, and understand the reason of it: which was, that it was *the life of the beast*, which God accepted instead of their life, when they had forfeited it by their sins." To conclude this point, I will adduce a passage from the Book of Leviticus: "I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you, which hunteth or catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off."

The care of God, which extended itself to all things living, in admirable provision for their wants and gratifications, is beautifully manifested: "He caused the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man." He accommodated the food He had provided to the circumstances of each one, shewing therein wisdom and goodness most excellent. It is an additional proof of the original supe-

riority of man, in every faculty he possessed, over other living creatures; an additional proof, that, from the beginning, superiority and dominion were intended for him. The cattle, and the fowl, and the creeping thing, were not endued with properties enabling them to provide, instrumentally, their own food; there was no capability to this purpose, nothing adapting them to it, either in the form of their bodies, or the character of their instinct. Proofs of sagacity are, certainly, exhibited by many of them in wonderful manner, in the searching for and in the storing of food; but they have no means of providing it, as man has; they search for and they store it, already prepared to their use, if we may so speak concerning them. They were enabled to seek it; their instinct taught what was fit for them, and where to find it; and that was the extent of property, either given or required. It was not so with man. Cultivation, and care of a higher kind, were necessary to him in his seeking of the food appointed; the herb which bare seed, and the tree in the which was the fruit of a tree yielding seed, demanded a thoughtful and an inventive attention: besides which, these fruits were to be gathered—were to be husbanded: he was himself to look for food—to provide; here, therefore, are eminent marks of superior design and capacity. Even here was he shewn that he had duties, and that he had superiority; that his was an existence, not destined to end in a mere temporary frame, but one in which

were involved a great plan and purpose of the Almighty Creator.

When God had thus made, and blessed, and gifted man, He put him into the garden of Eden, a place which appears to have been previously formed,—on the third day, as is generally credited,—if we receive the term in literal signification, as, whatever may be said to the contrary, I think we must; and there again He gave him directions, what he was to eat, and what he was to abstain from eating. No mention of this place occurs in the history of the works of the six days; and, for the omission, a good reason, in my judgment, has been assigned. The first chapter of the Book of Genesis delivers an account of creation in its general view; and, the formation of the garden being one particular act of it, it was left by Moses to be spoken of in the recapitulation of the second chapter; but, our present subject will not be complete, unless a notice of it be introduced. This I will reserve for the matter of the next chapter. I now say thus much, in order to gain an opportunity of stating the reason for which no mention is made of the formation of this garden in the first chapter, or of the appointment of it for the more peculiar habitation of the first man. It is, in fact, the same reason, for which the particulars of the formation of woman, and some others, are reserved for the statements of the second chapter.

I will close this part of our proposal with claiming

attention to the vast beneficence of the Creator, which so fitted His works to the service of His creatures; which provided, to perpetual generations, the spontaneous productions of the earth for those who were by their nature unable to cultivate the ground; but which made a superior care and foresight necessary in those to whom He had given properties of designing and executing. That beneficence still exists. The food of irrational animals will still grow—man must exercise his ingenuity, his care, his foresight. “The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.” A change in the same respect and degree has been made in the appointment of the irrational animals, but the same distinction remains—“The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and unto his labour until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.” Man must yet do as was then ordained; and his own efforts alone are not sufficient now, as they were not then; the blessing of God is yet necessary to give effect to the work; nor will it be given, unless man answerably exercise the powers that have been bestowed on him. Though he has a permission to use animal food, the fruits of the ground are essential to his proper support: he cannot exist in any comfort, or in any continuance, without them. The plant and the tree are altogether essential. Even the animal food would fail him, if he did not duly cultivate the

ground. Thus do we see how the same order has existed from the beginning of things, in its relative degree, unto the present age; how that plan, on which God first acted, is yet in operation; how the means, which He then ordained for the sustenance of man, must yet be applied to; how the truth of His word is fulfilled; how the verity of His power is confirmed to us. We are under His Providence: all things do depend upon Him; and, it is on an acknowledgment of dependence, and on our acting as He has commanded us to act, that our enjoyment of them rests. Every thing we have is of His gift. "I have given"—are the words of the grant. If He had not given we could not have had: if His blessing were not upon all things, they could not be useful to us: from Him they derive their power of nourishment, with every other utility. These properties He may likewise remove or suspend at His pleasure. This is an awful consideration, and one that should never be lost sight of. We should remember Him, in every possession, and every enjoyment. His blessing should always be intreated, His power acknowledged, and His loving-kindness praised. Gracious is He, bounteous, and merciful. We may think that our own ingenuity is very excellent; that our own foresight is admirable; that our own care is great;—but what would they be if God did not "give?" "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it," is true in general sense. Every property, by which we have, or gain to ourselves, possession, or enjoyment, has proceeded from Him: and, in all our

works of art, in all that we do for our comfort or pleasure, it is His Spirit which is present, and which gives the ability of application to the use we have devised. We could not bring "food out of the earth;" we could not have the "wine that maketh glad the heart;" nor the "oil that maketh the face to shine;" nor the "bread that strengtheneth the heart," unless God's blessing went with it all. Let the words, "I have given," be deeply impressed upon us: let them dwell with us, and go with us, in all we desire, and in all we do. God is the giver of all—of the substance—and of the ability to an useful purpose. "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live,"—declares the extensiveness of His power; and that that, which gives the ability to the herb, and the plant, and the tree; which gives it to the animal to be food and sustenance, can assign it to whatever else at pleasure; and, for this plain reason, that it is His power alone which *can* give the ability. "The eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season. He opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing"—"Therefore not unto us, not unto us, but unto his name, let us give the glory, for his mercy, and for his truth's sake."



## CHAPTER XI.

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Genesis ii. 8—14.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

WHEN God had made man, He put him, we are told, into a place which was called "the garden of Eden," and which has since been and is now commonly denominated "Paradise;" and the inspired historian of creation presents us, in his second chapter, with a particular description of this garden, its productions, and local position. He calls it "the garden of Eden" in this instance: "And the Lord God took

the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it." In the thirteenth chapter of this same book, he calls it "the garden of the Lord." The word "Eden" is applied, whether—for it is a matter of dispute—to this spot, or to the whole country in which it lay, as signifying the superior pleasantness of it above other places in even that early stage of the world; the literal construction of it being "pleasure," or "delight."

We first remark that it is said, "the Lord God planted a garden *eastward* in Eden;" and it is an opinion which has been much urged, that the word translated "eastward" means, and ought to have been rendered "on the third day," because, as it is stated, the garden was formed on the third day; and some rules of construction give authority for such rendering; but the more probable and the better construction is, nevertheless, that which stands in our authorized version, corroborated as it is by the fact that Moses elsewhere uses the same word in the same sense. It is undoubtedly most agreeable to the declared order of creation, that the forming and planting of this garden should be received by us as to have been accomplished on the third day, on which day the earth was disposed into its various arrangements, and the power of production was assigned to it; yet, it is to be noted, that the part of the history, with which we are now concerned, professes to give a descriptive account of this garden, its locality, and its advantages; and it is but reasonable that it should specifically point to the quarter in which it was situated;

consequently, if we reject the word "Eastward," substituting for it the words "on the third day," there will seem to be a deficiency of information; and I do not see why, in the recapitulatory statement, the day on which this garden was formed should be particularized, when no similar particularizing is made in regard to other and equally important matters there mentioned.

It has been doubted, likewise, whether the name of "Eden" was originally given to the garden, the country of which it was a portion thence deriving its name, or whether Moses intends to say, that God planted this garden in the country, which in his days, and previously, was called "Eden," and which appellation was given to it from its more favourable circumstances. I am inclined to think that there is correctness in the latter suggestion, for there was then a large tract of country, of singular fertility, known by this name; and it is the expression, that God planted the garden "*in* Eden," "eastward in Eden;" the garden not consisting, as we may infer, of the whole country, but only of a part of it, to the eastward. Again,—learned Commentators, and other writers, have argued that the word "eastward" is made use of to signify that the position was eastward of Judea, or of the desert of the Amorites, where it is generally understood that Moses was at the time of his writing this book. This I admit to be one inference from the expression, but not the entire meaning of it. I would rather consider him as wishing to inform us, that this garden was in the

eastward of the country then called "Eden," and which "Eden" lay eastward of the place of his own then sojournment. "It is true, indeed," says a scriptural geographer,<sup>1</sup> "that it is not certainly to be determined whether Moses would, by the expression *eastward*, only give us to understand, that Paradise was easterly in respect of himself, when he was writing, and in respect to the promised land; or whether he meant that it was in the easterly *part* of the land of Eden. But Moses having said that Paradise was planted in the *land of Eden*, and this being so near Arabia Petræa, where probably the Israelites then were; as they could not be well ignorant of its situation, it seems to have been sufficient to have said, that *Paradise was in the land* of Eden, to let them know that it was *easterly* in regard to the place they were then in, and to the Promised Land. Wherefore it remains, that Moses, by saying that the garden was planted *eastward* in Eden, designed to mark out to them in what *part* or *place* of the land of Eden Paradise was seated. And indeed it seems not likely, that Moses, having undertaken to describe exactly the situation of this garden, (of which he, in the series of his narrative, gives so precise and uniform marks,) after he had said, that it stood *in the land of Eden*, should neglect to express the *part* of that land wherein it stood."

This garden, however, be these things as they will, is presented or exhibited to us as an emblem of what-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wells.

ever is pleasant and delightful; it is recorded to have contained "every tree which was pleasant to the sight and good for food;" to have had, also, "the tree of life in the midst" of it, and "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Here it was that man was placed; and this it was into which he was "put, to dress it, and to keep it;" and, when placed in it, that he received the command, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

It is necessary that we discuss in regular order the several subjects which are thus brought to our view; the actual locality of "the garden of Eden;" "the tree of life; the tree of knowledge of good and evil;" and the condition of man in this his first residence. It will be convenient to appropriate a chapter to each one, and to take them in the order I have just named. The actual locality of the garden of Eden is, therefore, our present subject.

Various opinions, many of them so strange as to make it almost incredible that they should have been entertained, have been holden on this point<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Many, both among Jews and Christians, have so little understood the importance of a true history of the beginning of the world, and of the human race, as the only sure foundation of the true religion, and have so little relished the simplicity of this narrative, or have found it so contrary to the preconceived opinions of their own, borrowed chiefly from the Greek Philosophy, that they would have it considered as history in the disguise of allegory, and not to be taken in its literal meaning.

The discussions have not only involved a question of the locality of the garden, but the actual existence

It is a sufficient confutation of this notion, that if the Mosaic history be an allegory, it is allegory without a key, which no man can interpret; and delivering his history in this disguise, the inspired teacher of the chosen race has in truth given no information, and might as well have left his tale untold, as have told it in so obscure a riddle; which is neither calculated to convey any moral truth, nor to serve any political purpose the author might be supposed to have in view. If Paradise was not literally such a garden as Moses has described, but the condition of the first man represented under that image; what then was the reality which that image represents? What were the particulars of the first man's first condition? If the prohibition imposed upon him was not simply that of tasting the fruit of a particular tree, but of something else; what was that something else really forbidden? If the woman was not formed out of a portion of the body of the man; what was the actual manner of her formation, which is enigmatically so described? We may add another consideration. The narrative of this chapter must be either all plain matter of fact, or all allegory. It cannot be matter of fact in one part, and allegory in another. For no writer of true history would mix plain matter of fact with allegory in one continued narrative, without any intimation of a transition from the one to the other. If, therefore, any part of this narrative be matter of fact, no part is allegorical. On the other hand, if any part be allegorical, no part is naked matter of fact: and the consequence of this will be, that every thing in every part of the whole narrative must be allegorical. If the formation of the woman out of man be allegory, the woman must be an allegorical woman. The man therefore must be an allegorical man; for of such man only the allegorical woman will be a meet companion. If the man is allegorical, his paradise will be an allegorical garden; the trees that grew in it, allegorical trees; the rivers that watered it, allegorical rivers: and thus we may ascend to the very beginning of the creation; and conclude

of it as parcel of the earth. By some it has been allegorized, received altogether in a mystical sense, the very rivers which mark its situation being made to have mystical meaning. By some it has been placed in a higher region of the air, carried out of the visible world. Others have understood it as denoting the whole earth in its primal fertility. There have, moreover, been others, who, admitting it as parcel of the earth, have so differed in respect of its position, as to fix it in the most opposite directions, some in the extremest north, and some in the extremest south. Our safest course is to follow, as implicitly and literally as we can, the account of Moses: without his account, we have no information at all; for, the traditions of the heathen possess no value otherwise than as they prove that there once was such a place, they being corruptions of a first account, increased upon in every age by fable and fancy<sup>1</sup>. It is revelation alone which can give a correct insight; and the revelation of the Bible is the only revelation man has. That "the garden of Eden" was a place, having real and visible existence;

at last that the heavens are allegorical heavens, and the earth an allegorical earth. Thus the whole history of the creation will be allegory, of which the real subject is not disclosed; and in this absurdity the scheme of allegory ends.—BISHOP HORSLEY.

<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt to be made, but that the garden of Eden, planted by the hand of God, and that, in some respects, in a supernatural manner, hath been the pattern, out of which the poets have formed their fortunate islands, the Elysian fields, the meadows of Pluto, the gardens of the Hesperides, of Jupiter, and Alcinous.—DR. WELLS.

a spot chosen by God out of a particular region of the earth, and blessed in more than ordinary degree, —I hold to be true. It is described by Moses geographically; and it is spoken of as part of a country then well understood. Circumstances are related by him as concerning it, which make local existence a necessary conclusion; boundaries and productions are named in positive terms; therefore, and because, if we receive Moses, we must receive his account, I will neither occupy time, nor waste matter, in discussing the question of its actual existence, further than by offering a notice brief as may be.

Allegorical is not so usually mixed up with actual description as to give us any warrant for the inference, that, in this place, where Moses is setting forth the history of creation, a visible work, he would introduce an allegorical or mere figurative work, the effect of which would necessarily be to throw doubt and shade on all else. If the description of Paradise be allegorical, where does allegory begin, and where does it end? We shall be left to view the whole history as but allegory; and then what must be our conduct in respect of any knowledge of the works of creation, or of the Creator Himself? I accordingly, take "the garden of Eden" to have been a real spot<sup>1</sup>, marked out and dis-

<sup>1</sup> Of this seate and place of Paradise all ages have held dispute; and the opinions and judgements have been in effect, as divers, among those that have written upon this part of Genesis, as upon any one place therein, seeming most obscure: some there are, that have conceived the being of the terrestrial Paradise, without all regard of the world's geographie, and without any respect of



tinguished from the rest of the earth, and designed for the special habitation of man, while at the same

east and west, or any consideration of the place where Moses wrote, and from whence he directed (by the quarters of the heavens) the way how to find out and judge, in what region of the world this garden was by God planted, wherein hee was exceeding respective and precise. Others, by being themselves ignorant in the Hebrew, followed the first interpretation, or trusting to their own judgements, understood one place for another; and one error is so fruitful, as it begetteth a thousand children, if the licentiousnesse thereof bee not timely restrayned. And thirdly, those writers which gave themselves to follow and imitate others, were in all things so observant sectatours of those masters, whom they admired and beleaved in, as they thought it safer to condemne their owne understanding, than to examine theirs. For (saith Valianus in his Epistle of Paradise) *Magnos errores, magnorum virorum auctoritate persuasi, transmittimus; Wee passe over many grosse errors, by the authority of great men led and persuaded.* And it is true, that many of the fathers were farre wide from the understanding of this place. I speake it not, that I myselfe dare presume to censure them, for I reverence both their learning and their pietie, and yet not bound to follow them any further, than they are guided by truth; for they were men, *et humanum est errare.* And to the end that no man should be proud of himselfe, God hath distributed unto men such a portion of knowledge, as the wisest may behold in themselves their owne weaknesse: *Nulli unquam dedit omnia Deus; God never gave the knowledge of all things to any one.* St. Paul confest that hee knew not, whether he were taken up into the third heaven in the flesh, or out of the flesh; and Christ himself acknowledgeth thus much, that neither men nor angels knew of the latter day; and therefore, seeing knowledge is infinite, it is God (according to St. Jude) who is only wise. *Sapientia ubi invenitur? (Saith Job) but where is wisdom found? and where is the place of understanding? man knoweth not the price thereof, for it is not found in the*

time he was lord of all besides; an assumption or conception, agreeable to perfect reason and the facts of the case, inasmuch as it cannot be at variance with either to suppose that the Lord of the lower world should have been so placed as to shew his superiority, as well in position, as in other instance, over the rest of creation; as to shew, by every suitable distinction, his more eminent faculties, and the higher station he possessed in the care and favour of the Almighty Master and Creator. And, if we receive the account of Moses as actual description, we must receive his account of position also; and this will put to flight any idea which would set paradise in a higher region of the air,—for, he is speaking of the terrestrial soil; or which would locate it in any other part of the earth, than that to which his words, literally construed, appoint it, for, if we abandon literal construction, our clue is gone: we will, I say, regard it as having been “planted in Eden—eastward in Eden<sup>1</sup>,” and so in its position to

*land of the living.* And therefore seeing God found folly in his angels, men's judgements (which inhabite in houses of clay) cannot be without their mistakings: and so the fathers, and other learned men, excusable in particulars, especially in those whereupon our salvation dependeth not.—*RALEIGH.*

<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ blissful Paradise

Of God the garden was, by Him in th' east  
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line  
From Auran eastward to the regal towers  
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
Or where the sons of Eden long before  
Dwelt in Telassar. MILTON.

have agreed with the efflux of the four rivers mentioned under the names of Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates. In truth, as the precise spot is not now to be found, and men, ever eager for discovery, have been anxious to ascertain it, and to have it supposed, perhaps even more, that they have ascertained it, they have invented theories, and embodied fancies, endeavouring to bring the sacred writings into an apparent consistency with them,—a practice not less dangerous than it is unwarrantable and sinful.

We will, in pursuance of the conclusion determined on, treat of this garden as a place of actual existence, and we will look for its local situation so nearly as we are permitted ; so nearly as the Bible justifies, and enables us. The learned have taken considerable pains to identify the exact spot of ground, and some have thought that they have succeeded ; but it need hardly be said they have been decidedly in error. We will not pretend so to identify it : the Scripture does not lead to it. The words of Moses could not intend us to find it : the tract of country which they include is large ; although its very position would seem to be clearly fixed, still is the description sufficiently general to keep it from discovery. They say it was “ eastward in Eden,” and that from “ out of Eden a river went to water the garden ;” and that from thence, from Eden, or, according to the Commentator,<sup>1</sup> “ below the garden,” it was parted, and “ became into four heads.” Either construction,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

“out of Eden,” or “below the garden,” is so general, as, notwithstanding it would carry us somewhat near, yet keeps us far enough from the exact spot to prevent identification. “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden.” “These words,” I use the language of the same Commentator, and shall continue throughout this explanation in great part to do so, “afford us such a key to open to us the place where this garden was planted, that we can scarce doubt whereabout it was; though the precise spot of ground be not marked out in this description of it. For it lay in the country of Eden; and we are directed to find that out by this remarkable circumstance, *that a river went out of it*. Which doth not signifie that the spring of the river was in Eden; but that the river ran through that country into the garden, *to water it*. The garden, therefore, it is probable, was a part of the province of Eden; and was watered by that river which came from it.” “And from thence it was parted,”—“was divided again, as it had been before, into two other streams. By which words we seem to have found the place where the garden ended; but being not told where it began, nor how far it spread itself eastward from the river side, I will not presume to say what country or countries it included.” “And became into four heads.” “He doth not say was *parted* into four heads, but became into four heads, (whose names here follow,) two before they united, Tigris, (or Hiddekel,) and Euphrates; and two after they again parted, Pison, and Gihon.” “The name of the first is

Pison." "This is that branch that runs westerly; and being nearest to the place where Moses wrote, on the other side of Jordan, is first mentioned by him." "That is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah." "By finding where this country was, we certainly find the river Pison. Now Moses makes mention of two Havilahs; one descended from Cush, and the other from Joktan. The latter of these cannot be meant, for his posterity were planted eastward." "And Joktan begat Almodad, and Shaleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, and Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these were the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the east." "But the former was intended, who was the son of Cush," and whose descendants "were a more western people, in that part of Arabia Felix which bordered upon this stream." The biblical description adds, "where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium, and the onyx stone." The gold of Arabia was celebrated, and was in high esteem, both for the large masses in which it was found, and for its admirable quality and colour. On the subject of the bdellium, translators have differed; some thinking it to be an aromatic gum, some crystal, and others pearl. Probability inclines to the latter; and we learn, that that part of Arabia, which lies upon the Persian Gulf, was famous for pearl-fishing; but, whether the word mean the one production or the other, the position

will hold good, for this country was eminently abundant in both. In addition, we must remark, there is plenteous proof that it was likewise famous for precious stones, the onyx, and the sardonyx. So is the land of Havilah, compassed by Pison, brought to our knowledge. "And the name of the second river is Gihon." "There is no footstep of this name remaining; but we are directed, by the country it is said to compass, to take it to be the eastern stream that arose from the parting of Euphrates and Tigris, as Pison was the western." "The same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia," or Cush. "The river Pison, being known to be the first river in respect to the place where Moses was writing, it is but natural to suppose, that the Gihon, as being the second, was the river next to it, and consequently the eastern channel of the two, into which the Euphrates, after its conjunction with the Tigris, is again divided<sup>1</sup>." Besides this, it is well ascertained, "that the country adjoining to the easterly mouth of the Euphrates, had formerly the name of Cush, and hath it still at present<sup>2</sup>." "And the name of the third river is Hiddekel," called by the Greeks, "Tigris;" and which yet, in the language of the country on the confines of Media, is known as Hiddekel. "That is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria."<sup>3</sup> "The word Assyria," says the Geographer<sup>3</sup>, "may be taken, either properly to denote only that one province, which was first so called, and whereof Nineveh was the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wells.<sup>2</sup> Id.<sup>3</sup> Id.

capital city; or else in a larger sense, so as to comprehend many great provinces belonging to the kings of Assyria, and which made up the Assyrian empire. The word was not taken in the latter or larger sense, till long after Moses, who therefore could understand by the name of Assyria only a small province about Nineveh. Now the river Tigris does run along *before Assyria* so taken, and considered in respect of the place where Moses was writing: insomuch that going from the parts where Moses was directly to Assyria, there is no coming into it without crossing first the Tigris, as running along *before* it, or running along *on that side of Assyria* which lay next to the parts where Moses wrote. Wherefore the peculiar mark, whereby Moses points out the situation of the Hiddekel, thus exactly agreeing to the Tigris, it seems past all doubt, that the former is the very same with the latter." "And the fourth river is Euphrates." Of this river Moses gives no description, and offers no trace. It was too well known to require any. The course of it was exactly ascertained.

It was in this country, so described, and so bounded, that "the garden of Eden" was planted. However, with all this information, exact as it may appear, none of the learned men of the Jews, from the most remote times, whose opportunities for fixing its site were far superior to those afforded in later times, have understood the true spot. All inquired: each one almost had his theory: conjecture was ever busy: none did satisfy: none was

satisfied. It is, indeed, true, that there were many places which were called by this name; and the similarity has led to false opinion; but that similarity arose, either from imitation in name of this original Eden, "the Garden," or "Paradise," of which somewhat, however erroneous and corrupt, seems to have come to all men by tradition; or because the places so named were remarkable for their pleasantness, fertility, and salubrity, and had the name given, from the general term, by reason thereof; wherefore, that in the eastern part of the world there are or have been places which from very ancient date have been called by this name, supplies no ground, as some have imagined, for the attributing to them the character of the "Eden," or "Paradise" of this chapter. The situation of it has been laid in particular parts, for that those parts are now more favoured and fertile, in appearance, soil, and climate, than others. That there was a difference between the condition of Eden, I mean the country of Eden of which Moses here speaks, and the rest of the earth, before the Flood, I am not prepared to deny; but, ere the earth had undergone the curse, all was different from present appearance; and, hence, no argument is to be built hereupon. Man was formed in the east. Previously to the Flood, all the settlements of mankind were in the portion of the east in which he was formed; and, subsequently to the Flood, it was from the same quarter that other parts were peopled; and, as it contains within it spots and districts more fertile and pleasant than are elsewhere



to be found, it is not unlikely, that, on the change, both through the curse and through the Flood, the Almighty suffered that part to retain more of its original character than any other. We do not seek for Eden in frosts and snows, in wilds and fastnesses, in blackness and sterility, but, rather, in warmth and serenity, in meads and pastures, in brilliance and fertility.

It is, from these several testimonies, undoubted, that our Paradise lay in the east; for it is described, not generally as lying eastward, but as lying in a particular part of the eastern division of the world; in that part, from whence arose the river, which "became into four heads," and which compassed certain great countries. Numerous as have been the endeavours to define the spot; strong in their conceptions as men at all times have been,—all has been insufficient; and we have no better understanding of it at this moment than was had at the commencement of inquiry. Whether it has happened by some change, contraction, or otherwise, on the direct interposition of God; whether, by the action of the Flood, as not a few will have it; or, by whatever else,—all vestiges to guide us to the exact point have been totally removed; we approach near,—of that we cannot but be conscious,—yet we do not find it; and this is in entire agreement with the sentence which at the Fall was executed on Adam and Eve: part of it was expulsion from Paradise: "therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from

whence he was taken. So He drove out the man ; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." It is manifest from this that God designed man not again to enter "the garden of Eden ;" and, therefore, He would not permit his eye to rest on it, or his foot to tread it ; He would keep it sacred from his gaze, and inviolate from his touch ; and this consideration will at once and adequately account for the fruitlessness of every attempt to ascertain its precise position. He permitted his historian, Moses, to say so much, that we might have assurance that He had in the beginning prepared this seat of blessedness from which man for his disobedience was expelled ; but, that we should know more, is not accordant with his purpose. Whatever, in consequence, was this "garden," this "Paradise ;" if, as we believe, a spot selected from the earth, and made by the bounty of the Creator more complete in glory and felicity ; if, in contradiction of this our more rational, and, I may say, Scriptural belief, as some would persuade, a mere figure, an allegory, portraying the more exalted state of happiness which man enjoyed in innocence ; or ought else it might have been,—it must, until the consummation, remain in great part mystery. The flaming sword of the cherubim, turning every way, will forbid our approach, and prevent our acquiring knowledge in any considerable extent regarding it. Whatever it was, the disobedience of man removed him from it : it

was neither the spot, nor the condition, in which he afterwards lived. If God has shut it up, who shall open it? or, how shall we find it? Cease we from all presumptuous and vain inquiry: let that knowledge alone be sought after, which shall certainly be profitable; that which assures us of God's wisdom and truth; and, where the divine seal is set, there let us bow with a lowly and faithful submission. We know, in this matter, enough for truth; the reality is perceptible by us, in so far as it can be of avail to aid us in the ways of fidelity and virtue. For this be we thankful. On it let us rest. "Can we by searching find out God? Can we find out the Almighty unto perfection? If He cut off, or shut up, or gather together, who can hinder Him?" But, alas! "vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt."

## CHAPTER XII.

## GENESIS ii. 9.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

THE garden of Eden contained, besides its other many, various, and delightful productions, two trees, to which our special notice is directed ; one of them is called " the tree of life," and the other " the tree of knowledge of good and evil." These are said, in the construction, to have been placed " in the midst of the garden ;" but, it has been thought that no more is meant than that they stood in a conspicuous part, so as to be visible above others ; yet, references in the Scriptures to the tree of life would, rather, tell us that it occupied a central situation ; and, although the word thus translated is frequently used to signify excellence, it may likewise have its more literal construction ; and, if there be any case in which the literal construction is the most agreeable to the sense of the passage, the present is one. It is highly probable that the two trees should have

been planted in a central spot: the very circumstance that an extraordinary eminence is meant, would intimate that they were. Indeed, may not the word, which is here translated "in the midst," and which elsewhere implies eminence, or distinction, have obtained its latter signification from the former, the central being generally considered the most eminent position, or place of distinction? There are, moreover, some, who would use the word as but denoting that the trees were planted "within the garden," because, as insisted, it is at times used in that sense. It, certainly, has, at times, that apparent sense; and, wherefore so? wherefore, but to signify "within" in a more pointed manner; more within, more in the inner part? The simple translation "within" is not sufficient in this instance. In the third chapter of Genesis, where the serpent is introduced as tempting the woman, she is related to have said, in answer to his question—"Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is *in the midst* of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." An annotator<sup>1</sup> has referred to this verse as explanatory of the word we are discussing; and he has determined that the meaning of it is merely "within the garden." This is plainly wrong. The example proves the contrary of the annotation. A distinc-

<sup>1</sup> Ainsworth.

tion is drawn between the trees of the garden, from their respective positions. They were all "within" it; but Eve speaks of this as in a particular spot; the word in her mouth is descriptive; she describes it, in order that by her description it may be known from the rest; and she says that it stands "in the midst," as our version has it. This is a description which the serpent would comprehend; but that other and more general signification would not aid him in his inquiry. Thus does it seem designed to exhibit the situation of these trees; and, what more fitting than that their situation should be as is said? So do I conclude, that it is intended we should understand them as having been planted "in the midst of the garden."

Any endeavour to give an exact description or indisputable explanation of the trees of life and of knowledge, must be ineffectual. Writers have proposed to describe and explain them on theoretical grounds, but their labours have invariably ended in leaving themselves and others in as much darkness as before. They have failed, because they have wandered from the evidence. Some have gone so far as to conceit themselves that they have discovered the tree of knowledge in present and visible existence; which is a manifest absurdity; as though God, who had shut up the place itself in which it grew, and in which only He had planted it, from our sight and knowledge, should still have left this open to gaze and use, should have suffered its propagation, as He must have done, if the supposition or conceit

be well founded, in other parts of the earth. This is one, amongst the many proofs with which we are supplied, of the egregious and palpable errors into which an overweening conceit will carry men. Some, too, have allegorized these trees, as they have allegorized Paradise; but, in refutation, we may ask them, will they allegorize obedience and disobedience? will they allegorize life and death? The exact appearance of them, then, I presume, it is impossible we should know. They are called trees, or plants, of the garden; and the appellation is consistent with their place and purpose; but their reality must be the subject of revelation; and any inferences we may draw, as respecting them, must be drawn from the Scriptures. No other source, or pretended source, of information, will help us: all other sources will, assuredly, mislead us. It is not denied to us to make inquiry, provided it be bounded by proper limits, be directed by a proper spirit, and aimed towards a proper object. Those limits must be the Scriptures; that spirit must originate in an ingenuous desire to have a better knowledge of God's will; and that object must be the increase of faith and obedience. The subject is deeply awful. It is awful, as concerns both God and ourselves; as concerns God, by whom the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge, were planted, to maintain life in and to prove man; and whose honour was lamentably wounded by man's failure in the proof;—as concerns man, whose first happiness was made to be dependent upon them; whose fall from life and happiness

they remind of; and whose restoration is now dependent on a faith and obedience of the promise of which they are the symbols; who, looking back on the tree of life, knows that it was intended for his good; and, on the tree of knowledge, knows that from the violation of its sacredness has sprung all he has of evil. Let our inquiry, therefore, be conducted with humility, and by Scriptural rule; with a careful avoidance of whatever the Scriptures do not authorize; and, let the effect of it be, a better persuasion of the necessity, and a more fixed resolution, of a strict adherence in all things to the will of God. This is our sole legitimate end of inquiry; this is the sole method by which we can obtain satisfaction or benefit.

We will commence with the tree of life, the consideration of which will absorb our present limits.

In performance of our proposal, it will be our safest and most instructive course, first, to adduce what the Scriptures say of the tree of life in a direct sense, with a direct reference to it; and, secondly, by way of deduction and illustration, to bring forward such mention of it as is descriptive or comparative. By this means we may avoid error; for, our foundation will be the Holy Scriptures themselves, which are truth indefeasible.

The first notice we have of the tree of life is in the ninth verse of this the second chapter of Genesis, where it is coupled with the tree of knowledge of good and evil, being made to have co-equal



existence and similar position with it. The garden had been described as having been planted, and the man as having been formed or put into it; and now its productions are immediately delivered to us. The general productions of the earth had been previously spoken of, in the fifth verse: this passage refers only to the garden of Eden: "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The next notice occurs in the twenty-second and the twenty-fourth verses of the following chapter, when God executed His sentence of expulsion against man: "Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever . . . . And He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." The other occurrences of the mention of this tree, of the like character, are to be found in the book of the Revelation of St. John, in the second and the twenty-second chapters, at the seventh verse of the former, and at the second and the fourteenth of the latter: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. "In the midst of the street of it," of the river of the water of life," and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits; and the leaves of the tree

were for the healing of the nations—Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” These are the only direct notices of the tree of life, which the Scriptures afford us; but they, few and brief as they are, give every instruction which can be serviceable. We are, in the first place, informed, that it was planted by God Himself, in the middle of Paradise. There was, in its original intention, an use in it for Man’s benefit, or it would not have been put into such a place. What this use was, is made known to us by the words of God on the expulsion, and by the great care which was had in preventing any application to it by him who had offended, and so become unworthy of its advantages—“lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever—and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword that turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” Indeed, the very denomination of “tree of life” would signify to us that there was in it a faculty of either giving or preserving life. It had not the faculty of giving life, life having already, before man was put into paradise, been given by the Creator from whom alone the original principle could have been derived. It might, as an instrument of His, be preservative of life; and, that it was but an instrument of His, is evident, as well from the fact of its having been shut up by Him, as from the fact of its having been planted by Him. In either case, His perfect

control is visible, visible in creative and in preventive power. It appears from hence, that there was a very extraordinary virtue in this tree, the virtue of preserving life in interminable duration; and that man was driven from Paradise, that his corrupt life might not be perpetuated. His visible parts, being material and compound, requiring nourishment for the holding of them together, ordinary food was to a certain extent sufficient for that purpose; but, the very idea of a material substance infers perishability, and is itself argument, that, to preserve or maintain undissolved that of which it consists, there must be a constant renewal. This is a law of nature, or, more properly to speak, a provision of God; we, therefore, seem justified in believing that the tree of life had a faculty granted to it by the Creator of keeping in constant renewal the supports of man's otherwise perishable frame. There is nothing unreasonable or unscriptural in this: there is nothing, I say, contrary to any rule of reason; there is nothing, contrary to any declaration of the Scriptures, that the same God, who had given to ordinary food the faculty of preserving life for a lesser term, should have given it to this for the greater. It is an equal miracle that bread should uphold the animal being through seventy or eighty years, as that the produce of this tree should have been capable of upholding it to perpetuity. The one was as easy to God as the other. What is time in His sight? "A thousand years are but as yesterday"—and—"one day is as a thousand years." If

He could grant to any instrument or agent the faculty of maintaining life for one day, why not for one year? and, if for one year, why not for a thousand? and, if so, why not to perpetuity? Where is the limit to be fixed? It is, in respect of it, as of the body itself. The body is now adapted to a principle of continuance by the space of threescore years and ten. There were times, when it continued many hundred years; and wherefore was it, but because it was adapted by the Creator to that principle? Previously, it was adapted to the principle, by the means of the fruit of this tree, of unending existence. When access to the tree was barred, the power of perpetuity ceased; and the existence of the body was gradually reduced to its present comparatively short term. "The tree of life," says the commentator<sup>1</sup>, was "so called, because there was a virtue in it, as several of the ancient fathers think, not only to repair the animal spirits, as other nourishment doth; but also to preserve and maintain them, and all the organs of the body, in the same equal temper and state, wherein they were created, without any decay: until man should have been fit to be translated into another world." This seems agreeable to the case. Man's continuance in Paradise depended on condition: while he continued there, he was in no danger of dissolution, or death; and God says, that, if he should eat of the fruit of the tree of life,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Patrick.

he would live for ever<sup>1</sup>. What conclusion can we draw, but that it was by the tree of life He intended, had man not sinned, that he should live? If we now refer to the passages in the Revelation of St. John, we shall see this interpretation to be confirmed. The first of them promises "to him that overcometh" the privilege of "eating of the tree of life;" the

<sup>1</sup> The prohibition given to Adam concerning the not eating of the tree of knowledge, is ushered in (which very few interpreters take an exact notice of) with this express donation or grant of God, that he might freely eat of all the rest of the trees of Paradise, the tree of life not excepted. Now it is certain the tree of life was so called, because it was either a sacrament and divine sign, or else a natural means of immortality; that is, because he that should have used it, would, (either by the natural virtue of the tree itself continually repairing the decays of nature, or else by the power of God) have lived for ever, as God himself plainly assures us, Gen. iii. 22, 23, 24. So that the sense of this whole legislation to Adam is apparently this: If thou shalt obey my command in not eating of the tree of knowledge, thou mayest continue in Paradise, and freely enjoy all the other delights thereof, not being debarred from the tree of life itself, which thou mayest eat of, and live for ever: but if thou transgress this my commandment, in the eating of the tree of knowledge, thou shalt certainly die.—The very commination itself, *in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, manifestly implies a promise. This consequence (whatever some idle wits have fancied to the contrary) is most firm: God threateneth death to man, if he eat of the forbidden fruit; therefore He promiseth life if he do not eat. For how insignificant would have been the threatening of death, to man's eating of the forbidden fruit, if he should certainly and necessarily have died, whether he had eaten or not!

BISHOP BULL.

second states that "the leaves" of it were "for the healing of the nations," whose disease we know to have been death; and the third, which is very remarkable in the terms of it, and singularly apposite to our purpose, asserts that "they that do God's commandments have a right to the tree of life." If Adam had continued in obedience, he would have retained his "right to the tree of life," his continuance in Paradise being of compact, to which compact there were two parties, God and himself; and, although his creation and his position in Paradise were of the free grace of God, yet, as God had vouchsafed to enter into covenant or compact with him, he may be truly said, so long as he fulfilled his part, to have had "a right" to that which was given or promised to fulfilment. This passage and those others do, therefore, teach us, that "they that do God's commandments have a right" to be placed in the state in which Adam stood before his transgression, which state was life in Paradise; and which life was by the eating of the fruit of the tree of life: we, consequently, come to the result, that the tree of life was that by which the life of man was ordained by the Creator to have a perpetual continuance. The Gospel pronounces that the obedient under it shall enter into life; they being under a new covenant, confirmed by the promise of God. Life was covenanted to obedience in Paradise: life is covenanted to obedience in Christ: and the evangelist of the Revelation says that the life under the Gospel-covenant shall be had by eating of the tree of life,—

a symbolical expression, certainly ; but it could have had no symbolical meaning, if the original of it had not been real. This gives us the quality of the tree, to the extent we can receive it ; and it gives it, to shew what that is which it behoves us to seek after, even life ; and the way, by which the state or condition of life is brought to our understanding, is by the medium of this tree. So will a sincere recourse to the Scriptures open to us all it is desirable we should know. These few passages explain more than the most laborious researches of the wisest men, if they can be called wise men whose wisdom excludes Scriptural instruction as an inviolable principle, that have ever lived, can demonstrate to us, who have not undeviatingly depended on the Scriptures for their rules and explanations. The tree of life was a perpetual source of immortality ; it was that which grew but in Paradise ; that which could grow no where else ; no other soil was suited to it ; no other climate was genial : and it was that which God would permit the innocent only to enjoy : we do not enjoy it now, because we are not innocent ; and we can only be made fit for its enjoyment by the merits of Him, whose redeeming love hath, to the obedient, blotted out the transgression of Adam<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The report of this tree was also brought to the ancient poets : for as from the indigested matter of chaos, Hesiodus, Homer, Ovid, and others, steal the invention of the created world ; so from the garden of Paradise they took the platforme of the orchard of Alcinous, and another of the Hesperides ; and from the tree of

We will now apply to some prominent passages of the Scriptures, which, as descriptive, or comparative, may aid in the illustration of this subject. David, in his first Psalm, and Jeremiah, in the seventeenth chapter of his prophecy, liken the godly, in very similar language, to a tree; and in such manner that we can hardly but understand them to have had in their view the tree of life. Says the former, "He shall be like a tree, planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." It is the language of the latter, "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." These descriptions are accordant with those of St. John in the Revelation; and, although I would not prove an earlier by a later mode of expression, yet, as St. John is speaking in words which would be, to those conversant with the Scriptures, of ready apprehension; and, as his description of the tree of life, he placing it by the river, would agree with general opinion; he, too, speaking of its fruit and its leaves,—we may assume that he gives us authority for using those former descriptions as intended for this

life, their nectar, and ambrosia; for *nectar*, according to Suidas, signifieth *making young*, and ambrosia, immortalitie; and therefore said to be the meate and drink of the gods.—RALEIGH.



tree; he either drawing his description from them, or using the same terms, and so confirming their correctness, whether as symbolical or real. They all describe their tree as planted by the river; and it is no forced construction to say, that both David and Jeremiah, by way of comparison, are making a reference to it; for the tree of life was the only tree whose leaf would not wither; the only tree which would not suffer from heat or drought; the only tree which was watered by living waters; and the Scriptures throughout, the Old and the New, speak in such wise of living waters as to make their application to the tree of life far other than inappropriate. I will extract but one passage, in present proof, from the Old Testament; and that is a very remarkable one in the Book of the prophet Zechariah, in the fourteenth chapter. In declaring the coming and the kingdom of Christ, he says, "And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem." I will extract two passages from the New Testament; either of them from the gospel of St. John; one from the fourth chapter, where Christ, in His conversation with the woman of Samaria, tells her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water;" which water He afterwards says should be "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The other is from the seventh chapter, when, "in the last day of the feast, He stood, and cried out, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." These concurrent testimonies do satisfy us, that the expressions of both prophets, David and Jeremiah, have the intention I would advocate, and more especially since, on looking back to a preceding verse in the same chapter of Jeremiah, we see the wicked man likened unto "the heath in the desert, not seeing when good cometh; and inhabiting the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited;" this description exactly agreeing with parts of Arabia, with the borders of the Dead and the Red Sea, tracts of country, from appearance and situation, well put in contrast with "the garden of the Lord," we may not doubt the design. Solomon, in his Book of Proverbs, likens wisdom and righteousness, and whatsoever is praiseworthy in man and acceptable to God, to "a tree of life." And he does so, because this original tree of life did or was intended to maintain life; and because by those excellent qualities is life, in that they procure the favour of God, which is life now and the promise of everlasting life hereafter. He avers that "wisdom is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her,"—that "the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life." Our blessed Lord, while He does not in so direct terms make His comparison from the tree of life, does, nevertheless, so repeatedly make His comparison from a tree and its fruit, as to justify our suggestion that He drew it from the same source.

These instances will suffice to our seeing that there was an old and general conviction, that this tree was designed for the perpetual preservation of life, that by it man's body was to be maintained in immortality, and that it would have been so maintained, had he not forfeited his "right" to it by disobedience. Powerful, awful, and extensive, is thus shewn us was its quality: it is enough to make us regard it with fear; to make us to suffer no thought concerning it to be harboured by us which has not a scriptural warrant. There was a mysterious influence in it; and, further than what the Scriptures have declared, we shall in vain seek to know: the same cherubim, and the same sword, which forbid our entering the garden of Eden, forbid more knowledge of this, its best, and most exalted, and most awful production<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> That these trees of life and knowledge were material trees, (though figures of the law and of the gospel,) it is not doubted by the most religious and learned writers: although the wits of men, which are so volatile, as nothing can fixe them, and so slipperie, as nothing can fasten them, have in this also delivered to the world an imaginarie doctrine. The tree of life (say the Hebrews) hath a plurall construction, and is to be understood, *lignum vitarum*, the tree of lives, because the fruit thereof had a propertie, to preserve both the growing, sensitive, and rationall life of man; and not onely (but for Adam's transgression) had prolonged his owne dayes, but also given a dureful continuance to all his posteritie: and that, so long as a body compounded of elements could last. And, although it is hard to thinke that flesh and blood could be immortall, but that it must once perish and rot, by the unchanged law of God, imposed on his creatures,

Those mysteries, which God has shut up, cannot be penetrated by us; and it is unwise, to say the least of it, to endeavour to burst His bars. The tree of life, from every description, declaration, and teaching, that we have, we are not unauthorized in concluding, had the faculty of continuing life indefinitely; how, or by what means, we know not; that is and must be mystery; and it is shut up from our use—how, we know not; that is mystery too; and man was driven from it, and from the place in which it was planted, because it was not fit that a corrupt nature should be possessed of immortality; “lest,” in his sinful state, “he should put forth his hand, and

man (notwithstanding) should have enjoyed thereby a long, healthful, and ungrieved life: after which (according to the opinion of most divines) he should have been translated, as Enoch was. And as before the flood the dayes of men had the long measure of eight hundred or nine hundred yeeres; and, soone after the flood, of two hundred yeeres and upwards, even to five hundred: so, if Adam had not disobeyed God’s first and easie commandment, the lives of men on earth might have continued double, treble, or quadruple to any of the longest times of the first age, as many learned men have conceived. Chrysostome, Rupertus, Tostatus, and others, were of beleefe, that (but for Adam’s fall and transgression) Adam and his posteritie had been immortall. But such is the infinite wisdom of God, as he foresaw that the earth could not have contained mankind; or else, that millions of soules must have been ungenerated, and have had no being, if the first number, wherewith the earth was replenished, had abode thereon for ever; and therefore that of Chrysostome must be understood of immortalitie of bodies, which should have been translated and glorified. But of what kind or species this tree was no man hath taken on him to teach.—RALEIGH.

take, and eat, and live for ever." So far, in this particular instance, we are informed ; but the gate of more knowledge is closed. It is the object of the inspired historian to give that information of the circumstances of man and of the world before the fall, which will enable and persuade us to love our duties ; which will shew us what man once was, so far as we can receive it, and what is required of us that we may be restored to the favour, which, so long as he retained his innocence, he was in the enjoyment of. The tree of life was his highest privilege ; it was the pledge of life ; and its presence was the sign to him of his own innocence and of the favour of his Creator ; and to us it is the symbol and the promise of what faith and obedience shall make us and raise us unto. The grand purpose of all revelation, is the performance of the will of God ; and the end of that is everlasting life. He that looks to it with other expectation, desire, or purpose, will necessarily meet with disappointment and confusion. God's purpose is as fixed, as His Revelation is true ; they must act, each one in harmony with the other ; the one is given but for fulfilment of the other : it has essential respect to it ; it is its minister, as all is God's will ; and surely God will not allow either knowledge or power, which shall not be entirely consistent with it, to have force or being ; He will suffer nothing but what shall serve to its uses.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## GENESIS ii. 9.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

THERE was, as we have noticed, another tree, standing in the midst of the garden of Eden, with the history of which we are importantly concerned : it was called “ the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” A deeper mystery hangs about this tree than that which is upon the tree of life. The frequent reference of the Scriptures to the tree of life, gives much of interpretation of it and its use ; but this one, not in like manner referred to, is enveloped, as it were, in thickest darkness,—one proper effect of the violation of the command which prohibited the eating of it. Our inquiry in respect of it must be very cautious and very humble : all mere speculation must be avoided with scrupulous exactness : no wandering of the imagination must be suffered : we must proceed on scriptural ground alone, narrow as may seem the pathway of it, not turning to the right hand or to the left.

This tree, we are informed, was planted in Paradise by God ; which information tells us, that, if abstained from, there was nothing in its design hostile to the interests of man ; thus the goodness of the Creator, in the planting of it, is unimpeachable ; for Paradise, from the very signification of the term, could not have admitted or contributed to its growth, if its nature or character had been malignant and noxious. That the eating of it was, in the result, destructive to man, is not to be ascribed to any innate evil in the tree, but to man's abuse of its property and intention ; and, since God formed nothing without a benevolent purpose, at the close of each work, pronouncing it to be "good," we may be sure that, if man had passed his probation satisfactorily, it would, in some way or other to us now secret, have been applied to the augmentation of his happiness, or, at least, to the continuance of his enjoyment. It was placed in Paradise, and within man's reach. Why it was placed within his reach, when the touch of it was death, can appear to us only as with a purpose of probation, or trial. The other purposes, which God had in it, I repeat, we are and must be ignorant of ; and that there might have been purposes connected with us and our welfare, which would thereafter have been perceptible, had man retained his innocence, but which his disobedience frustrated, is accordant with every notion we have of God, His wisdom, and His goodness ; this, however, is a subject upon which we cannot enter, as we have no revelation of it : besides which, it would carry us out

into questions regarding the fall, whereas our present proposal is but of creation, and the condition of man before the happening of the fall; and all such inquiry as it would cause us to make, as concerning this tree, would not and could not bring us nearer to the understanding of it. The planting of it, and the nature of it, so far as the words which acquaint us with its existence, and with the effect which the application to it would produce, are all with which we have to do—all, upon which we can gain any instructive knowledge. The only safe way in which we can look to it, is as of probation, it having been to man the means of probation, and that in which he wretchedly failed; the consequences of his failure are, unhappily, too evident to us. To the violation of God's prohibitory command, death was promised; and, on violation of it, death did ensue; death, moral and physical. The subject is awful, and not to be approached without fear and trembling.

The tree is called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil:" this is the appellation given to it in the verse which narrates its planting or growing; and this is likewise the appellation by which God makes it known to Adam, and in which He forbids the eating of it. The words "knowledge of good and evil" undoubtedly have a meaning, in which the nature and the effect of the tree, as unto man, are necessarily intended; and, it can be no undue prying into the secret things, that we endeavour to explain them, provided, it is again and again to be urged,



that we confine ourselves to them. We know the tree but under this appellation, and by the effect which it had upon mankind. Some persons have supposed that the name was added to it after the fall and from its effect, man then, when it was too late to see the folly of desiring the knowledge, truly understanding what had been good for him, and what was evil; then seeing that good had lain in abstinence, and that evil had sprung from violation; but, this supposition is, I think, to be rejected. There is no sufficient ground for it. In the history of the planting of Paradise, it is called by this name; and, if that were the only occurrence of it in the chapter containing that history, it would not be adverse to any rules of construction to suppose that Moses was speaking of it, not under its original name, but under a name by which in his days it was generally known; when, however, we find God Himself, in His warning to Adam, describing it by this same name, we are left in the absolute necessity of assuming, that that was the name given to it by the Creator: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The name, in all probability, was given from its anticipated effect; from its property, which could not but be known in its utmost extent unto God; and, why should man depart from the plain words of Scripture, when they supply an intelligible and appropriate meaning? why should he endeavour to graft useless theories upon clear declarations and statements?

Most commentators seem to be of opinion, that the name was given because God would try man by this tree whether he would be obedient or disobedient; yet, I doubt the sufficiency of such an interpretation; I do not perceive in it an adequateness to the subject. It, certainly, was that, by which man's obedience, or disobedience was to be known; still, that was the proof, not the effect. The name I hold to have been given by the Creator, from his knowledge, which compassed futurity, of the effect of it, which effect was *the knowledge of good and evil*. It is thus seen to be very significant. So long as man refrained from it, he would understand there was evil in the touch; he would understand, that the only knowledge he should gain by application to it, would be evil,—the knowledge of evil, corrupting and empoisoning the knowledge of good. It is not to be thought, that, because the word "good" is introduced, the eating of the fruit of the tree would give a better knowledge of good. When Adam was about to transgress, he might have been tempted to think so: but, the mixture of evil with good destroys, or noxiously affects, the enjoyment of good. Good he had; and, as he had it in fullest measure, why should he have sought to know more than had been given and revealed? Evil he did not desire; and, he was deceived into an imagination that he might make himself acquainted with the nature of evil, without being noxiously affected by it,—a most palpable deceit, as St. Paul would teach us where he says, "I had not known sin but

by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law, sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." We, therefore, conclude, that there was in this tree a property, which, if abused, would cause an injurious change in the nature of man: and, although the very determination to disobey was itself a change of nature,—for, when man had brought his mind to consent to the violation of an express commandment of God, he may be truly said then to have undergone a change of nature, his innocence having been shaken from its base, and he having cast off his clothing of holiness, nevertheless, until the act was committed, the change was not apparent. Man's nature, then, underwent change, first by his determination to disobey, which induced him to approach the tree with the purpose of eating of its fruit; and, next, by the eating of the fruit, which, as I have said, would, in its abuse, beget in him such a change as should be immediately visible. Sin consists of two parts, the internal and the external sin: the former is that which is conceived in the heart; and the latter is that which is brought into action: it is, according to our blessed Saviour's ample illustration,—“Whosoever looketh

upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." So would it be with Adam: the first desire to eat of the tree was sin; and the taking of it was the further progress of sin. We do not, it will thus appear, altogether agree with those who would call the tree a mere probation, as though it possessed no power in itself; and as though that probation might have been in any thing else. We allow that it might have been in any thing else, if God had so chosen; but, we are not here discussing what God might have done, but what He did do; and the plain construction of the Scripture will tell us, that He planted a tree which had a certain property in it; and that He issued a command of abstinence from it, which command had a twofold design,—the proving of man, and the preventing his touch of that which would deteriorate his nature. We may now understand that the tree of knowledge was it, by which man's obedience would be tried; that it was a tree, by which the knowledge of good and evil would be attained, or, by which he would learn the knowledge of the crimes he could be guilty of against his Creator and Benefactor; and which, had he not had this knowledge, he could not have been guilty of;—for, how could he have sinned without the knowledge of sin?—and that in the tree was a property, which, if violated, would be very deleterious to his at present innocent and immortal nature. This is all the knowledge which the Scriptures afford us of the intention of this name; and is it not enough? It

tells us, that eating of the tree was sin, by it being the knowledge of sin. If Adam had not eaten of it, he would not have known sin; he would not have learned to sin; but sin, "taking occasion by the commandment, deceived him, and slew him." Was the commandment sin? God forbid! "Was then that which was good made death unto him? God forbid! But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in him by that which was good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

Of this tree, thus planted, and thus named, and possessed of this property, God said, "Thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Of every other tree of the garden, permission had been given freely to eat. This was forbidden; and the reason wherefore it was forbidden, was graciously accorded: it would introduce death. Man, consequently, had two motives for abstaining,—the commandment of the Creator, which once given, to violate it was sin,—and the effect, which would be the deprivation of his then happiness and being. We need make no further inquiry why God prohibited the fruit of this tree; his wisdom and goodness are alike verified in commanding an abstinence from it. Man was designed for life; this would produce death; so God's purpose and man's welfare were equally concerned in it. Our inquiry will be, what was the death, which was spoken of as the result of eating of it? Man is informed, that, in the day he should eat of this tree, he should die; that the immortality he

possessed, as man, should become forfeit. The condition on which he was to continue in Paradise was his abstinence from it : the fruit of it, by giving him the knowledge of good and evil, would render him an unfit inhabitant there. The effect of eating it would be sin ; and the effect of sin would be his removal from the garden of Eden, in which was planted the tree of life ; and, if removed from the tree of life, his body could no longer support an immortal existence. The promise, then, of these words, is, that he would sin, and that he would die ; the latter, as a consequence of the former. We have seen in what his sin would consist : we will now see in what the promised death would also consist. We have learnt, that man was made up, or compounded, in mysterious union, of two parts, body and soul ; *that*, a material substance, requiring, for continued existence, material support ; *this*, an immortal essence, supported in other and to us unknown manner by the Almighty, who had ordained that it should not be subject to dissolution as was the body. The body, on condition, was not to die ; and, as it was afterwards sentenced to death by removal from the tree of life, we infer that by the tree of life its immortality was maintained, or was to be maintained ; death was, by reason hereof, a removal of man from Paradise, and a placing of him in a situation where the food he should be supplied with would have power to support his visible form or person but through a limited term. The body, then, would return to that which it originally was—dust ; and the soul would return

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unto God, from whom it came, to be dealt with according to his justice. The body, being composed of parts, was dissolvable. The soul, not being composed of parts, was not dissolvable. The body was not originally immortal; its origin was dust; and to that it could return. The soul was originally immortal, and could only return to whence it came—to God. This was the death which was promised; and this is the death which was actually inflicted. God had declared to Adam, that, if he should eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in the day that he did eat thereof he should surely die; that his material frame should thenceforth commence its waste unto dissolution and mouldering decay. “Thou shalt surely die”—intends that he should in the visible flesh become mortal; that he should depart from Paradise, which was the seat of immortality; that his body should depend on other (and corruptible) food for its subsistence, than in it he enjoyed; and, so, in gradual failure, proceed to dissolution; and the punishment, actually inflicted on his transgression, was a forfeiture of Paradise; a removal from the tree of life; from the happiness, both in himself and in surrounding objects, of which he had hitherto been master; and a necessity of dissolution, of a return in his body to the dust from which he had been taken. He had, on his creation, come pure and spotless from the hand of God; but sin changed his material body, reducing it to what we now see it to be; and at the same time cast a blot on his soul, which made it also offensive in the eye of God. I will, however, go no further on this

point, as we are not discussing the event of the Fall, to which the observation, if more extended, would necessarily lead. I have been obliged to make so much reference to it, because the threat, or denunciation, of death, is essentially connected with the death itself; and I could explain the meaning of the denunciation of death but by shewing what death afterwards was. The knowledge of good and evil, we are, therefore, to infer, placed man in actual sin; sin placed him in death; and it placed him in death by effecting his removal from the ordained means of life; for, God says, that, although he was in a state of sin, and notwithstanding his nature had become corrupt, yet, if he were permitted to remain by the tree of life, he would "eat, and live for ever."

The prohibition was delivered to both the man and the woman, though the account of the particular formation of the woman is given after the statement of it. This chapter, we must remember, as has been before remarked, is a recapitulation of the works of creation, in some instances more minute than the first account had been; and, in the history of the garden of Eden, which had been made or formed on the third day, is related all that concerned *it*; of that concernment the tree of knowledge, with its prohibition, composed a very important portion. Besides, in the third chapter, Eve acknowledges, in her temptation by the serpent, that they both had received it. She is included in the serpent's inquiry, and she includes herself in the answer; moreover, as she did eat, and as she was punished for eating,



it is clear that the prohibition was equally given to herself.

How long this trial was to have continued, if man had at the first stood firm in his innocence, we cannot know. We cannot know, whether it was to be a trial to all his posterity, or whether it would have ceased with Adam, although it is not inconsistent with any scriptural information we have, to suppose that it would have been concluded in him. In him was represented all his posterity; and it is probable, that, had he passed such a probation as should have been satisfactory to God, the possibility of offending might have been removed; but of this we are unable to judge; and it is a question, which, perhaps, it will be wise not to encourage. I will, therefore, only observe as regarding it, that, if all men thereafter were to have been subjected to the same trial; if the trial were to have been without limit,—some might have offended, and some might not have offended; some might have violated, and some might have abstained. It would, thus, seem, that, by means unknown to us, God would end the probation in a definite term, in his own good and appointed season; yet, be this as it will, there was, we may assure ourselves, a wise provision for the meeting of every circumstance of the case.

Many strange fancies have been entertained on the subject of this tree; some, concerning the appearance of it; others, concerning the prohibition of it. I have purposely and carefully refrained from introducing any of them here. Not founded on Scripture,

they can have no truth in them; and, by consequence, there can be no utility in speaking of them. The matter itself is of too awful a character to be made the subject of loose conjecture and speculation; and, if the Scriptures have been so silent upon it, it becomes us to use a reverential forbearance. It was an improper desire of that which could not benefit him, and which had been forbidden, that occasioned the sin and the fall of Adam; and are we not running into the same error, and shall we not suffer the penalty of it, if we endeavour to violate the guards and the fences which God has fixed around this tree, in the knowledge of it? We see that it is enveloped in mystery, and that it is God who has so enveloped it. Is it not, then, sin, to seek, or even to desire, to break through the sacred inclosure? It is folly likewise; for who shall pass over that by which Omnipotence forbids access? God will laugh to scorn him that attempts it; and, while he derides him and his folly, will also remember the sin, and appoint a punishment for it. The very grief which ought to affect us when we cast our minds back on Adam's transgression, or think upon the consequences of it, should induce us to other views. The inquiry is a reminder of our state of littleness and sin; and the consciousness of that state should rather lead us to submit with humility to our ignorance, and rather to wish to continue in ignorance, than to covet more knowledge of what, the more knowledge we have, the more must our humiliation be increased. We have objects enough of legitimate inquiry. To the use of Adam every other tree of the garden was

freely given; there was sufficient allowed for the satisfying of every desire that could be satisfied with innocence and safety: he needed not to have coveted the knowledge or the taste of this. So with ourselves. There is to us an abundance of objects which it is permitted us to search into; there are more than with all our pains we can attain unto any considerable knowledge of; and it is with much difficulty that we can attain unto a knowledge of those that are necessary to our peace and welfare; and why should we consume our time, and harass our spirits, by seeking after that which will neither profit us, nor attend on our call, and which, moreover, has been forbidden? If it were fully known, it could but give us more knowledge of sin; and, surely, of sin we know enough. Therefore, let us cease all such inquiry; and let us look to the Scriptures alone for any information we may herein desire; what they do not give, is not intended for us; and, with whatever they give, let us be satisfied. It is not a subject, we must remember, of human wisdom, or of which human ingenuity and learning could have made any discovery, could have formed any conception, could have heard; we should never have known it but from revelation. Let us reject all attempted explanations, all theories, all fancies, which the conceit and folly of man would set before us in respect of it. It more becomes us to seek a knowledge by which we may recover our lost place in the favour of God; it more becomes us to seek the knowledge of his will; to learn the way by which He has made redemption possible to us. This

will be a better employment ; this will be a more profitable labour. This will bring us all the happiness our fallen condition will admit in the present life, and will carry us in the next to a state where our happiness shall be perfect ; and in which all the knowledge our present faculties are not capable of apprehending shall be revealed to us ; which shall give us a knowledge that shall satisfy, and in which there shall be no fear of transgression ; a knowledge, by which righteousness, and not sin, shall be revealed. God denies us no knowledge that can edify and profit. He did not deny a knowledge of this tree to our first parents, because He would retain them in ignorance for ignorance' sake, but because the knowledge would work confusion and destruction. It was not, as the tempter insinuated, that their eyes should not be opened, but because, if their eyes were opened, the opening of them would be to their hurt. This was his real motive ; and was it not a motive of benevolence ? was it not a motive far different from that which the author of evil attributed ? Judge by the result. This knowledge did bring evil. Until they had it, no plague could come nigh to do them injury. That malignant being uses similar arts against ourselves ; and, if we be deceived by them, we shall be justly condemned ; for we have not only their intrinsic falsehood to shew us of their ill intent, but the terrible example, also, of the original offence. Now to be deceived, is an accumulation of guilt, and a most wilful provoking of wrath.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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GENESIS ii. 8, 9.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden ; and there he put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

WE will now look to man in this his condition of original happiness. He was placed in the garden of Eden, or Paradise, as it has been also named. There was in this seat of blessedness every thing which he could desire, whatever was pleasant to the sight, and good for food : "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden ; and there He put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Man's food, even in Paradise, sprang from the ground ; and, likewise, as the words would intimate, the trees of life and of knowledge.

A more peculiar care was had in the planting and arranging of this garden. Designed for the special habitation of the man, it was a type, and a figure, and a representative, and a promise, of the future and better Paradise, to which we must believe it was the divine purpose at some time thereafter to call him, should he have established his claim to it by obedience in his probation. Here was he fixed as on his throne of dominion: here did he stand, lord of the whole lower creation. Formed elsewhere, on his formation, so soon as the breath of life had been breathed into him by his Creator, he was set in this happy spot. He was not, I say, formed in Paradise, or taken in his bodily members from the ground of it, since the sacred historian tells us that "in the garden of Eden" the Lord "put the man whom He had formed," and that He "took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it;" and he, also, acquaints us, that, after the Fall, "the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."

Writers, both of ancient and of later times, have had much to say concerning the manner in which they have supposed man to have been taken and put into Paradise; and the subject has led them into considerable discussion as to the form of the divine presence when God made his appearance to Adam. It is undoubted, that, in the earlier times of the world, the Divine Presence was of frequent and more personal manifestation. It was manifested to the patriarchs, and afterwards to the Israelites; and it

may be presumed that it was manifested in more glorious manner to Adam before the fall, when he was better able to endure the brightness of God's countenance, than at any subsequent time, to any of those others. God spoke with Enoch: He spoke with Abraham: He appeared in a flame of fire in a bush unto Moses: He was manifested on divers occasions during the progress of the Israelites from Egypt, and in their wanderings in the wilderness; and, when they had become settled in the land that He gave them, He vouchsafed, by visible glory, many tokens of his special and personal abiding among his people. With all these instances before us, and with the account of the conferences He held with our first parents, on their transgression, as related in the third chapter of Genesis, when He passed on them his sentence of expulsion from Paradise, and of labour and death, granting at the same time his promise of redemption, we may receive it as an assured fact; that, when God is said to have taken the man, and to have put him into the Garden of Eden, He himself carried him there in special manner,—in such manner, that Adam knew it was God by whom he was placed in it as his abode; but if we endeavour to describe the *form* of God's appearance, or to determine *how* Adam was carried into Paradise, as has been attempted of some, whether he was led by the hand by his Creator, or by whatever other means, we shall be catching at a vain conceit. It is, and ought to be considered, enough for us to know that God himself placed him there; that we do know; and, as

that is all which God has revealed to us, it is all that is intended we should know.

Man was not made in this place, as has been already seen, but in another part of the newly formed earth ; from which circumstance we are to learn, that the station he had in Paradise was of grace and not of right. The only right he had, so to speak, was to the ground from which he had been taken,—a consideration that should teach us still more of the equitable doing of God, who, in expelling him from Paradise, expelled him from a place and an appointment to which, in the probation assigned, he was to have earned a right of continuance,—to have earned it by fulfilling his part of the covenant between them, and in which he did not earn it. He was put into the garden, “ to dress it and to keep it.” God put him into it for two purposes ; the one—as a place of happiness to himself, and the other—as a place wherein he should perform duties towards Him, his Creator and Benefactor. He was “ to dress and to keep ” the garden ; the particular meaning of which words we can in no wise understand ; but, as God had put him into it, for a purpose of his own, and which purpose was declared to him, it is evident that man was bound to seek to it, and to do it. God’s supremacy was by this very act made known to him ; his dominion was recognised under it ; and man must have understood that he had possession of his happiness and his station only as he answered God’s purpose, that is, as he performed God’s will. There was, we may hence see, a more holy character belonging to



Paradise, than to any other portion of the visible world ; it was appropriate to man while in innocence, but it ceased to be appropriate to him, when he lost his innocence. Here, then, he was free from care, from sorrow, from sickness, from all apprehension of death. Every thing was in his possession which could give satisfaction and delight ; and but one prohibition was laid on him ; there was but one object in the whole range of the garden from which he was commanded to refrain ; all else was his ; that alone was forbidden, and it was forbidden, because to take it would be misery and death : “ Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” If he disobeyed this command, and violated this prohibition, his nature would suffer change and deterioration ; and it would so, because there was that in the tree of knowledge, which, if abused, would be the necessary conductor to a state whose end must be death ; and because God was pleased, and had appointed to try him by means of it ; and, if he failed in the trial, had ordained that death should ensue upon the failure.

This I conceive to be the true circumstance of the case. The warning, or prohibition,—for it may be viewed in either light,—was a command : the neglect of it was disobedience to the command. Man was now in the complete enjoyment of the divine favour ; possessing every kind and degree of knowledge which an innocent being could possess

or desire. We are authorized to infer thus much; sorrow, disappointment, and death, not being introduced, until the divine anger had been provoked by disobedience. This was God's original intention in man; this was the nature, and this was the character, He had bestowed upon him at his creation, and by the placing of him in Paradise, and which He had made him capable of retaining; and, we must admit, that the veriest benevolence was visible in the whole dispensation. He made him to be happy, not to be miserable; to live, not to die. It was his own after-sin which brought forth sorrow, and which called in death, to disturb the peace and order of the world. We are not to say what was the ultimate particular design of the Creator towards him; whether he was to have remained for ever in the garden of Eden, or Paradise, in his first condition, as some would have it, but which we do not seem to be warranted in concluding upon; whether his nature was there to have received a further exaltation and glory; or whether, after due trial, as may have been the more probable intention, he was to have been removed from thence unto higher happiness. Nor can we say, what dispensation, when mankind should have largely increased, according to the primal blessing, "Increase and multiply," was to have been theirs, had they been born, and had they lived, in purity and innocence; or, what was to have been the relative position of Paradise and Adam, with the rest of the earth and themselves. "Replenish the earth and subdue it"—shews that the whole earth was to

have been inhabited by them; but, what was to have been its relation generally to this particular portion of it, we are not informed. Questions have been raised concerning both these points, more curious than wise. Whatever might have been the purpose, it was frustrated. These things can now be known to God only: neither is the knowledge of them suited to us, nor are we suited to it; and, we may be sure, that it is more to our peace to have it not. We must be content, as one part and consequence of our deterioration, to remain on these, as well as on many other points, in an ignorance not to be dissipated. Whatever, notwithstanding, in them, was God's purpose, it was a purpose of wisdom and goodness: further good to man was it which was in prospect. They, with other matters to which in the preceding chapters I have made allusion, have undergone much and frequent investigation; and, as was to have been expected, with a constant want of success. Men have attained to a no more competent degree of knowledge on them than on other; and, it has been thus, because God has made no revelation of the particulars of the condition of man in Paradise, or of His own future design. We can only infer that the one was good, while we are told that the other was happiness. It was the sole object of the sacred historian to present us with such information as should be suitable to ourselves and our capacities, and correspondent with our condition; with such as should enable and lead us to fulfil our part of God's purpose. This has been amply done;

and that knowledge; which has not been granted, we may deem not to be necessary to the requirements of our faith, or the regulation of our conduct. Why should we seek to know what God had designed if man had not sinned, and which design his sin has prevented? Knowledge, to be properly knowledge; must have a purpose: it can in this case have none, because it cannot be made applicable to the altered circumstances. We are informed of man's general state previously to his sin; of his blessed state, and of the fact of his happiness; and of the state, also, to which his sin reduced him; of the qualifications necessary to replace him in the favour of God; and of as much of the state to which his now obedience shall carry him as may operate to the persuading of him to endeavour its attainment. This is a sufficiency of knowledge. It teaches us, that, whatever was the particular state of Adam in Paradise, whatever was the state, to which, if he had persevered in obedience, he had been finally destined, it was, in either case, a state of high and of higher happiness; a state, which he forfeited for himself and all his posterity; and the capacity of regaining which, or a similar state, can be acquired but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God and man, on faith and obedience. It was a state of happiness, adapted to the powers of his nature; it was a state of knowledge, complete to the capacity of his mind; there was no defect, no infirmity in it.

So blessed was this state, so satisfactory were the

enjoyments of it, that the condition of departed souls, who shall have passed their mortal course with fidelity, is termed Paradise, as if there were no other word so expressive of its serenity and peace; as if the felicity of the one were of the same kind and perfectness with the felicity of the other; a similitude, be it remarked, which our blessed Saviour has justified us in using. It was the language of his merciful promise to the penitent malefactor, who, in the agony of an ignominious and painful death, confessed his mission and divinity, "Verily, I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." St. Paul applies the word in the same signification where he says, "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into *Paradise*, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." St. John, in the Revelation, recording the words which he heard in the spirit, writes thus: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the *Paradise of God*;" —shewing, by the similitude, the exalted condition of man in that blessed place. The prophet Isaiah had been beforetime remarkably strong in his notions of it, comparing Zion, in her restoration, to Para-

dise, because he could compare her to nothing more desirable and attractive : his description, which refers to it under the appellation of Eden, and the garden of the Lord, is as follows : "The Lord shall comfort Zion : he will comfort all her waste places ; and he will make her wilderness like *Eden*, and her desert like *the garden of the Lord* ; joy and gladness shall be found therein ; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Ezekiel also speaks much to our purpose : "Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God : Thou sealest up the sum full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in *Eden the garden of the Lord* ; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold : the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created." And addressing himself to Israel, "In the day that I have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like *the garden of Eden*." These instances confirm our explanation. The application of our Saviour demonstrates, that Paradise, or the garden of Eden, was preparatory to a better state than itself. This first Paradise was not the place into which the souls of the faithful departed were

said to be conveyed; but it bore, I would suggest, the same relation to man's then intended ultimate appointment, as the Paradise, or receptacle, of the souls of the faithful departed, where they are holden until the final day in which body and soul shall be reunited, bears to the final inheritance of heaven; while there is this difference between them, that the one is not probationary, and the other was probationary: man's probation now ends with the separation of body and soul, which we call death; and the place of his soul until the last day,—I am still speaking of the faithful only,—is but a receptacle of peace; yet, it is a receptacle, in which he awaits his full and final happiness, as Adam would have awaited in Paradise his full and final happiness: and our Saviour's application of the term therefore proves, that Adam's Paradise was a place in which he was to have rested, or remained, until God's purpose should have called him to his more exalted destiny, in like manner as the souls of the faithful departed are now said by us to rest, or remain, in their Paradise until the day of judgment, when Christ shall appear in his glory, and with the holy angels, and shall summon them again to his presence in their bodies, for their portion of final happiness and glory with Himself in the everlasting and unchangeable mansions of heaven.

It should be our endeavour, earnest and sincere, to fit ourselves for this Paradise, this better Paradise, we are to say, because we shall there incur no danger of falling into sin, and offending God. Our

probation will have been ended: our mortal course will have been run. Our enjoyments there will be pure; our knowledge will be full, for, our capacities will be refined, will be relieved from all the clogs and incumbrances, which now cause us not rightly to apprehend the things that are before us; which hide from our sight; which make imperfect and obscure; and, our happiness, abundant as in itself it will be, will be still further enhanced by the certain consideration, that it will be succeeded by the more perfect happiness of heaven, in the presence of God, with His saints and angels for ever.

To the attainment of this most blessed state, let all our labours be directed; let all our study of God's word be guided by a desire to attain to it; and let every inquiry into the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, into an elucidation of any particular expressions of them, have the same object in view, we not striving to be wise above what is written, but determining and endeavouring, by all means, and beyond all other considerations, to submit ourselves, our words, and our thoughts, to that which is written, with every intention of the heart and soul; accounting all to be folly which is at variance therewith, for that it only is wisdom, it only is knowledge, it only leadeth to real happiness and glory, to comfort and peace here, and to true enjoyment hereafter. God's word was not intended for mere speculation. It is too sacred, too awful, to be so received, or used; and His just anger will surely fall on any who shall so unworthily treat it. The inquiry which is



instituted but with a view to a better faith, to a better obedience, to an altogether better submission, is in entire accordance with both His word and His design, and will be met by His own gracious co-operation. The grace of His Holy Spirit is promised to it; but confusion must necessarily attend on all other efforts. We cannot penetrate mysteries which God has closed; we cannot gain a knowledge which He has forbidden. What did Adam gain by eating of the forbidden tree? Not what he desired; but what he would have sacrificed the whole world to have had not—a knowledge that he had sinned—that he had become corrupt—that he had forfeited the favour of God. There can be no happiness where there is no peace of mind; and the very feverish thirst after forbidden knowledge is destructive of all peace; let, therefore, all our inquiries be bounded by the Holy Scriptures. In them is peace, because in them is life. The knowledge they do not give or lead to, the knowledge they forbid, is not to be obtained elsewhere, however Pride or other temptation may promise it to the credulous folly of man. If we have the wisdom they impart; if we have the knowledge they offer,—our knowledge will be as perfect as knowledge in the present life is intended to be; and our wisdom will be the most excellent that can be acquired; for, it will be certain, and righteous, unerring, and that which cannot deceive; and both our knowledge and our wisdom will be in agreement with the will of God; they will be, the knowledge of our duty,

and the wisdom of Holiness; the only knowledge, and the only wisdom, to which is engaged the blessedness of the life that is to come, where alone perfect knowledge and perfect wisdom can be had and enjoyed; and where alone the doubts, and the mysteries, and the darknesses, which now encompass us, and obscure our vision, bodily and mental, can be cleared away; where alone either can be rectified, and our senses made so pure and simple, as to see and to perceive clearly; to see God as He is; to understand ourselves, and our purpose; to know ourselves as from the beginning it was intended we should be. "Therefore, be we stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord."

## CHAPTER XV.

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GENESIS i. 31.

And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

THIS observation, which had so often before been particularly made, that is, at the conclusion of *each* specific portion of the work, is now appended to the whole of creation: "God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Each object of creation had been pronounced to be *good*; but the general expression is even stronger; the whole work is said to be *very good*. Each was good in itself, and for its own individual purpose; all are here seen to be good, not merely in individual parts and purposes, but in their relation each to other and to the whole. I remark the distinction, in order to shew what I conceive to be the true import of it, since there is an opinion, from which no inconsiderable mistake has been incurred, that the observation does not apply to the whole work, but to man alone, who was the last object of creation; and, that

although God had pronounced, by His inspired historian, all things to be good in their several kinds, He made no general application to that effect; but, when we suggest to ourselves that each was not made individually for itself, but generally for all, we recognize the fitness of the general term.

It is of no little moment that we have a right understanding of this part of our subject, because if we be induced to suppose, from any imagined defect of language or expression, that good, essentially, did not at this time operate through the world, we may, proceeding in error, come to believe, as some have unfortunately brought themselves to believe, that two principles were in action, the one good, and the other evil, and so cast unjust reflection upon the Almighty Creator, as if He had assigned to man an unequal contest to engage in. But such supposition is entirely at variance with the known attributes of God: He is all-powerful, all-wise, all-just, and all-good; and, to have created, or to have admitted, a principle of evil, had been to have acted in direct contradiction of himself in either capacity. As He is all-good, no evil could proceed from Him in concurrence with His own will; as He is all-just, he could not send evil into the world, and then condemn man for being overwhelmed by it; as He is all-wise, He could not throw man into a contest in which he must necessarily act against the divine honour; and, as He is all-powerful, evil could not gain an original place within His works, in defiance of Himself, as that would be to confess He was not the sole Creator

of the world. The expression very pointedly tells us that he made all things good and for good, with the manifest intention of informing us likewise that the introduction of evil was not of His appointment or agency; that he made every thing, not with an impossibility to fall, but with an ability to stand; with an ability to hold its place or station; that, as it proceeded in each instance from Himself, His command, or co-operation, it was good, was adapted to its purpose, and needed not to have been in any respect driven from it; that there was no incompleteness in either design or execution. It was thus, I say, in each individual case; and now that all was finished, the same expression, with the enlargement I have noticed, was, on a further and general survey, delivered upon it as a whole. This is, therefore, a vindication in the outset; and that evil did afterwards enter, is no disparagement of God's essential power; though He made all things good, He did not make them incapable, through any subsequent default of their own, of becoming otherwise; it was part of His purpose to prove them; and He gave a test, as we read in the second chapter, by which we may understand that He never did let His creatures know He had put them into a state by which they were independently good. He saw that they were good, and pronounced that they would continue so, if they should adhere to His direction; but that if, by reason of the degree of freedom with which he had endued them, they should deviate from their appointed course, they would then cease to be good, or would be deteriorated in qua-

lity, and imperfect in purpose. We have before us these facts; or truths,—that God made all things good, and that He made the degree of goodness to be dependent on conduct; and we have, besides, the origin, so far as concerns ourselves, of good and of evil. The matter is of ready illustration. A man forms a machine, and sets it, under conduct, to its course: he sees that it is able to accomplish the purpose he has in it, and that it will accomplish it, if it keep to the track he has marked; but that, if it be suffered to diverge from that track, it will fail of its purpose, and produce an effect which is adverse to it. Is the former of it chargeable with that adverse effect? Assuredly not. He only is chargeable, who neglected or disobeyed the direction he had received. The world is such a machine. Man is he to whose guidance it was committed, and who, by his transgression, carried it from its purpose, and introduced evil; so that the question is at last resolved into that of the endowment of man with freedom of will; and we are obliged to confess that it was an abuse of his freedom which gave rise to the principle of evil. “*God saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good;* and, consequently, like to come from the fountain of all goodness, and fit always to be ascribed to the same. Whatsoever is evil, is not by the Creator’s action, but by the creature’s defection. In vain then did the heretics of old, to remove a seeming inconvenience, renounce a certain truth; and whilst they feared to make their own God evil, they made Him partial, or but half the Deity, and so a companion at least with

an evil God. For dividing all things in this world into natures substantially evil, and substantially good, and apprehending a necessity of an origination conformable to so different a condition, they imagined one God essentially good, as the first principle of the one, another God essentially evil, as the original of the other. And this strange heresie began upon the first spreading of the gospel; as if the greatest light could not appear without a shadow<sup>1</sup>.”

There is nothing, there never has been any thing, proceeding from the hand, or by the ordinance, of God, which is not good. Perfect in himself, he cannot design imperfectness; nothing which he forms or devises is unadapted to its end; and that is the strict meaning in which the word “good” is to be taken in the several places in which it is used in the present chapter. He communicated so much of his own perfectness as the creature was capable of receiving. It is obvious, that perfectness could not be received by the creature in the same degree in which it was essential to the Creator; it could be received by the creature only as its nature would contain it. God, being perfect in Himself, could not admit imperfectness; whereas the creature was not perfect in itself, its degree of perfectness being by endowment on an inferior nature, and dependent on observance of the conditions on which it was granted; and this constituted the difference between the two. If the creature had been perfect, to the

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Pearson.

full extent of the term, would it not have ceased to exist in its character of a creature, or of a dependent, creation implying dependence? Would it not have been absolute in itself, and thereby have disputed, in its own instance, omnipotence with God, his control over it being no more? Our limitation must be allowed, or we shall run into an absurdity. The degree of goodness, or fitness, was the fulfilment of God's intention. It was thus with the light; that was sufficient to God's purpose in the creation of it. It was thus with the earth and the waters; with the produce of the earth; with the particular lights which were made to give light upon the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars; with the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air; with the cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth. They were suited to that purpose for which they were created. It was not, be it repeated, that they were, any of them, independent of God's power; that they were capable of themselves to support themselves; but that his purpose in them, whatever it might be, was complete; that they were enabled by Him to perform the service to which they were assigned. The expression is renewed, at the close of the sixth day, generally, as we have seen, over the whole. It had not been previously applied in particular reference to man, neither was it necessary it should have been. It had been applied once before on the same sixth day, after the creation of the cattle, the creeping thing, and the beast; and the reason of its application to them was, as in each other case, that



the creation of them was a complete work in itself. If it had not been applied there, and had been left to be used, as for them, but in the general expression, at the conclusion, an idea might seem to have countenance, that the other created beings of the earth were in their nature or origin equal to man ; or, at least, it would not have discountenance enough ; but, in addition to other evidence in favour of the contrary notion, this, also, now stands as a line of distinction between them ; it speaks of an essential difference. In truth, may we not say, that it was not so necessary to make a particular application of the words to man, and that Moses purposely avoided it ? The very form and mode of man's creation would testify, that he, as a work, was good, or that he was created entire to God's design of him. The history of his creation is this : " And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image ; in the image of God created He him ; male and female created He them." Could there be any doubt, with this statement, of the perfectness of man in his kind ? and does it not appear to be more consistent with the majesty of God, that the being, created in His image, and after His likeness, should be left in the assertion of that great fact, which of itself said that he was good, than that, when it had been said that he was created in

and after the divine image and likeness, a particular declaration of it should be made? Can any thing be added more to dignify, more to verify, the statement? Should we from ought else derive further information regarding it? What more can be said of a created being, than that he was made in the image and after the likeness of his Creator? It would have been a repetition, inferior in its character to the character of the original statement; it would have been a descent in terms. It would have been somewhat of a derogation of the dignity of God to seem to be taking survey of a work on which His own image was stamped: that image spoke a fuller meaning than any force of language could convey; and the inspired historian evinced a more thorough apprehension of his subject, and proved a better capacity of executing his office, by so leaving it, than would any attempt to improve upon it by added description have shewn. While, however, we say this, we are allowed and even compelled to say, that man was included in the general expression, for that asserts that *every thing* which God had made was good; and there is no derogation that the words of it are so applied to him, notwithstanding he was made in that eminent manner and form. God's dignity had been sufficiently asserted; and, now, the making of an exception would have led to a confusion of words and sense. Moreover, the expression being on the general and not the particular purpose, it was not unfitting that man, in the common use of it, should be pronounced good or suitable in reference

to the whole, while it had been abstained from in reference to him particularly. God here looked at him in relation to all, as He looked at all in relation to each other.

Thus has God enabled us to know how and to what purpose every part of Creation was formed; that it was for an use, and with power and adaptation to it. In this procedure was the highest benevolence. He made no contrarieties; He made no jarring elements; all were in concord; all were suited, each to the service of other. In the original of the world was no evil; and they that would make the Supreme Being to have introduced or consented to the existence of a principle of evil as well as of good, are doing Him a wrong, and denying His word. If He had so done or consented, it would have been that He was party to an opposition to Himself. Are we to suppose that He desired to thwart His own plans? that He had, or could have, a scheme of driving into opposition against Himself, and their own apparent purposes, any of the creatures He had made? To suppose that He admitted a principle of evil, is supposing all this; for, if he made a principle of evil, He was the maker of a principle whose endeavour it would be to act in opposition to His own will, and to turn His own creatures from the purposes for which He made them, to contrary purposes, it being the nature of evil to turn every thing from its true and proper intent; we are, therefore, supposing one of the plainest absurdities that can be, in supposing that God made, or connived at the admission of evil.

If He made two so contrary principles, we must hold them to have had powers originally equal; and, if they had, we must assume Him not to have known where the principle of evil would terminate; not to have known which would be victor; in short, we shall assume Him to have made, or admitted, a principle which would necessarily act against Himself, He not knowing to what extent it would succeed; which would be an utter denial of His power, His wisdom, and His goodness. Evil, then, was not original; and, that it was not original, is the grand reason we have for our persuasion that it cannot ultimately conquer. It arose from circumstance; from some failure of the agents themselves, in whom it afterwards operated, in consequence of abuse of the liberty to which they were left; and, that it was introduced, is no contradiction of either the knowledge or the power of the Creator; and, wherefore is it not, but that freedom of action was, for a wise and benevolent purpose, however abused, vouchsafed by His goodness? He did not make, He did not profess to have made,—but quite the contrary,—His reasonable creatures, and, in them, all creation, unable to fall from their state of goodness, though He did make them able to retain it; He indeed promised, that, in a certain event, they should lose their state of goodness, or relative perfectness, for He said, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Here was an actual declaration that evil might gain an entrance; but, that does

not make Him the cause of it; it did not enter by Him; it was shewn by what means, and by what means only, it could enter; which was by failure in the creatures.

This is the understanding, in which we are to take the expression, that "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Every thing was adapted to its appointed and respective purpose, and to His own entire intention, so long as the course He had directed should be undeviatingly followed. God stands justified; and the after-introduction of evil does not derogate from His own power, wisdom, justice, or goodness. He made us and all things good, and for good; He made all perfect in degree, and for continued perfectness; there was nothing which obliged us to wander from our purpose, or to be at this day other than we were in the beginning. Every observation we can form upon His works; every deduction we can draw from the teaching of reason; every interpretation we can give of His words,—do instruct us to the same effect. We are not now in that state of original perfectness; we cannot now so exactly answer the design of our creation; because the first offence, or failure, so threw every thing from its first intention, that there are, and will be, while the material world shall last, variances and contrarieties; but, still enough of good, or of adaptation to purpose, has been permitted to remain, to enable us to perform our several parts with some tolerable correctness, with a sufficient correctness, I may say, for answering

our yet purpose. So much of the image and likeness of God continues in man; so much of His blessing, delivered on creation, rests with him, that the world fulfils its office, and holds together, which it could not do, if some degree of goodness had not been suffered to remain to it. All there is of good in the world is derived from that which God then caused or ordained to be in it; and we ought to be thankful that He permitted any to remain with us; He might, if He had pleased, have withdrawn its influence altogether; and, if He had, we should have been irrecoverably lost; the whole world would have been sunken in ruin; for, the proper functions of the whole, or of any part of it, could not have been exercised. As it was the work of His hands, He would not let it be so lost; and, that it does remain, with all its arrangements, shewing the principle of original good, is proof of the wisdom and goodness of God.

Now let us praise Him for all his marvellous works; let us bless Him for creating us; and for creating us in such manner that our purpose *may* be fulfilled with satisfaction to ourselves, and, by His gracious endurance, to Him also. We have within us a capability of good; it *was* original in us; we were once sufficient of ourselves to please God; having lost that sufficiency by the lamentable event of the Fall, we regain in Christ so much as will make us acceptable; by Him the image of God is renewed: and, we not being sufficient in ourselves, He is sufficient for us. These things let us duly ponder,

piously grateful for all the divine mercies, for the mercy of creation, for that of preservation, and, above all, for that of redemption, by which our original and forfeited character has its restoration. Good, essentially, belongs unto God : He proved it in creation ; He proved it in preservation, “ giving us all things richly to enjoy ;” but, how much more glorious did He prove it in redemption, again opening to us the way to His favour in which is happiness everlasting. If good had not been in Him essentially, He would not have redeemed us, He could not have redeemed us, redemption being the highest act of goodness to be exemplified : that He did redeem us, shews Him to be good essentially.

Let us endeavour to conform ourselves to His will, so fulfilling our purpose in the present state, that we may be accounted justified in that to which we are moving, and in which our purpose will be subjected to neither deterioration nor change.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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GENESIS i. 31.

And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

I HAVE, from a wish not to interrupt the general order, and, also, an opinion of the necessity of a fuller vindication than could be had from an earlier notice, refrained until this point from direct remark on one part of our subject, of deep consequence in itself, and of prominent demand on our attention, by reason of the objection that has been raised against the Mosaic account in regard to it. We read, in literal strictness, that the whole work of creation was divided in accomplishment, as to time, into six parts, each part occupying the space of what is denominated a day; it being said, at the close of every such space, "And the evening and the morning were the first," or "the second," or any succeeding "day." As this is the last occurrence of the observation, it seems to propose an advantageous opportunity of discussion; and we may hence the better take it separately in itself, and without intervention in it of other matter.



The propriety of attaching a literal meaning has long been objected to, the word "day" having been supposed to signify a much larger portion of time than that of a natural day. This objection has been maintained on two grounds, the one of which is the variety of traditions amongst many ancient nations, ascribing other and larger portions of time to the works of creation, by whomsoever effected,—and the second the asserted fact, that the earth does yet offer such appearances as evidently shew it to have existed far longer than would have been the case if six days only had been occupied in the creation of it and its contents. The general answer to either must be obtained from the authority and purpose on and with which Moses wrote. If he were authorized by the Creator, his history is true; and then, since at that time much of false conception of God, of the world, and of themselves, prevailed with mankind, one great object before him was, we may believe, to correct it, and to establish a standard of undeniable proof. If those fancies, which were false and evil, prevailed at the time of his writing, and his own account so widely differed from them, it is clear that he intended to destroy them; and, unless they, who would retain the Mosaic account as a true account in its meaning, and yet hold to other than its usual acceptance, or receive the words of Moses and place on them an arbitrary construction, can bring evidence that Moses signified under them what they do not express, their conception is palpably erroneous. These are they

that, forming peculiar ideas from present appearances in the earth, profess a desire not to reject the account of Moses, while they endeavour to maintain a theory which is contrary to the ordinary construction of him, and who have therefore fallen upon this ingenious expedient. They admit his history from the creation, and what has been written since his time as recorded in the Bible, taking either in literal meaning; but this account, which literally taken, overturns their theories, they would have to mean something else. This is the true state of the question: the two parties are in some sort mixed together, although no union or alliance is acknowledged; those, who dare not or wish not avowedly to reject revelation as a guide implicitly to be followed, borrowing a main defence of their theory from others who are openly adverse to revelation, and against whom and their fallacies it is pointed; and tending in that instance to weaken it from no other cause than that it does not agree with their own imagined discoveries, and the system they would build upon them.

Was the world made in six days? No: says one objector: it is not possible that it should have been made within that space of time. Now, whether the actual space were the space of six days, of six years, or of six thousand years, is to the question of possibility of little moment. The Creator, who was able to accomplish the work in six thousand years, or any other named term, however lengthened, was able to have accomplished it in one day, or one instant; for,

to do it in any term, or at all, required the will of Omnipotence; and, we are not to suppose, even assuming it as certain that the work was accomplished in six days, that that portion of time, small as it might be, was necessary; they then, who argue for the necessity of any specific portion of time, argue wrongly; they set out with a limitation or circumscription of the power of an Omnipotent Creator. Whether the account of Moses be true, or whether it be not true, such a conceit is false in principle: it involves an absurdity. I treat this as at confessed variance with Moses, and in undisguised opposition to the doctrine of God's Omnipotence, which is a doctrine whose reality must be conceded as a preliminary step to any discussion on the works of Creation. The attempted enlargement of the word "day" I reserve to be considered in our inquiry into the other objection; and it is there that the whole question, as a scriptural question, will be more properly entered upon<sup>1</sup>. Why have ancient

<sup>1</sup> It is true, indeed, some ancient accounts there are which would persuade us to imagine a strange antiquity of the world, far beyond the annals of Moses, and account of the same Spirit which made it. The Egyptian priests pretended an exact chronology for some myriads of years, and the Chaldeans, or Assyrians, far outreckon them, in which they delivered not only a catalogue of their kings, but also a table of the eclipses of the sun and moon. But for their number of years nothing is more certain than their forgery; for the Egyptians did preserve the antiquities of other nations as well as their own, and by the evident fallacy in others have betrayed their own vanity. When Alexander entered Egypt with his victorious army, the priests

writers formed or entertained fancies of this description? Why, but that tradition had been corrupted?

could shew him out of their sacred histories an account of the Persian empire, which he gained by conquest, and the Macedonian, which he received by birth, of each for 8000 years: whereas nothing can be more certain, out of the best historical account, than that the Persian empire, whether begun in Cyrus or in Medus was not then 300 years old, and the Macedonian, begun in Caranus, not 500. They then, which made so large additions to advance the antiquity of other nations, and were so bold as to present them to those which so easily might refute them, (had they not delighted to be deceived to their own advantage, and took much pleasure in an honourable cheat) may, without any breach of charity, be suspected to have extended the account much higher for the honour of their own country. Besides, their Catalogues must needs be ridiculously incredible, when the Egyptians make their first kings' reigns above 1200 years a piece, and the Assyrians their's above 40,000: except ye take the Egyptian years for months, the Assyrians for days; and then the account will not seem so formidable. Again, for the calculation of eclipses, as it may be made for many thousand years to come, and be exactly true, and yet the world may end to-morrow; because the calculation must be made with this tacite condition,—If the bodies of the earth, and sun, and moon, do continue in their substance and constant motion so long: so may it also be made for millions of years past, and all be true, if the world have been so old; which the calculating doth not prove, but suppose. He then which should in the Egyptian temples see the description of so many eclipses of the sun and moon, could not be assured that they were all taken from real observation, when they might be as well described out of proleptical supposition. Beside, the motions of the sun, which they mention together and with authority equal to that of their other observations, are so incredible and palpably fabulous, that they take off all credit and esteem from the rest of their narrations. For with

that men, generally, had sunken into a gross ignorance ; that those few of them, who were possessed

this wild account of years, and seemingly accurate observations of the heavens, they left it written to posterity, that the whole course of the celestial motions were four times changed : so that the sun hath twice risen in the east, and set in the west, as now it does ; and, on the contrary, twice risen in the west, and set in the east. And thus these prodigious antiquaries refute themselves. What then are these feigned observations and fabulous descriptions for the world's antiquity, in respect not only of the infallible annals of the Spirit of God, but even of the constant testimonies of more sober men, and the real appearances and face of things, which speak them of a far shorter date ? If we look into the historians which give account of ancient times, nay, if we peruse the fictions of the poets, we shall find the first to have no footsteps, the last to feign no actions of so great antiquity. If the race of men had been eternall, or as old as the Egyptians and Chaldees fansie it ; how should it come to pass that the poetical inventions should find no actions worthy their heroick verse before the Trojan or the Theban war, or that great adventure of the Argonauts ? For whatsoever all the Muses, the daughters of Memory, could rehearse before those times, is nothing but the creation of the world, and the nativity of their gods. If we consider the necessaries of life, the ways of freedome and commerce, amongst men, and the inventions of all arts and sciences, the letters which we use, and languages which we speak ; they have all known originals, and may be traced to their first authors. The first beginnings were then so known and acknowledged by all, that the inventors and authors of them were reckoned amongst their gods, and worshipped by those to whom they had been so highly beneficial : which honour and adoration they could not have obtained, but from such as were really sensible of their former want, and had experience of a present advantage by their means. If we search into the nations themselves, we shall see none without some original : and were those authours extant

of a better or more cultivated intellect, and had encouraged in themselves more of a spirit of inves-

which have written of the first plantations and migrations of people, the foundations and inhabiting of cities and countreys, their first rudiments would appear as evident as their later growth and present condition. We know what ways within two thousand years people have made through vast and thick woods for their habitations, now as fertile, as populous as any. The Hercynian trees, in the time of the Cæsars, occupying so great a space, as to take up a journey of sixty days, were thought even then coeval with the world. We reade without any shew of contradiction, how this western part of the world hath been peopled from the east; and all the pretence of the Babylonian antiquity is nothing else, but that we all came from thence. Those eight persons saved in the ark, descending from the Gordiæan mountains, and, multiplying to a large collection in the plain of Sinaar, made their first division at that place: and that dispersion, or rather dissemination, hath peopled all other parts of the world, either never before inhabited, or dispeopled by the floud. These arguments have always seemed so clear and undeniable, that they have put not onely those who make the world eternall, but them also who confess it made, (but far more ancient than we believe it,) to a strange answer, to themselves uncertain, to us irrational. For to this they replied, That this world hath suffered many alterations, by utter destructions of nations, and depopulations of countreys, by which all monuments of antiquity were defaced, all arts and sciences utterly lost, all fair and stately fabricks ruined, and so mankind reduced to paucity, and the world often again returned into its infancy. This they conceived to have been done oftentimes in several ages, sometimes by a deluge of water, sometimes by a torrent of fire; and lest any of the elements might be thought not to conspire to the destruction of mankind, the air must sweep away whole empires at once, with infections, plagues, and earthquakes swallow up all ancient cities, and bury even the very ruines of them. By which answer of theirs they plainly afford

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tigation, were willing enough to discover the truth if they could, and, if they could not, were minded to invent what they hoped might be received for the truth? The truth was undiscoverable without a pure revelation; of that they were speedily convinced; and so we learn that they first encouraged a fancy, heeding not its fallaciousness, and scrupling not at deceit, and then raised a theory upon it; as they proceeded, they appear to have forgotten what it was upon which the theory had been raised, and that it had no foundation of worth or solidity. From a dispute of the space of time in which creation was

two great advantages to the Christian faith. First, because they manifestly shew that they had an universal tradition of Noah's flood, and the overthrow of the old world: secondly, because it was evident to them that there was no way to solve the eternity or antiquity of the world, or to answer this argument drawn from history and the appearances of things themselves, but by supposing innumerable deluges and deflagrations; which being merely feigned in themselves, not proved, (and that first by them which say they are not subject themselves unto them, as the Egyptians did, who, by the advantage of their peculiar situation, feared neither perishing by fire nor water) serve only for a confirmation of Noah's flood so many ages past, and the surer expectation of St. Peter's fire, we know not how soon to come. It remaineth then that we stedfastly believe, not only that the *heavens and the earth and all the host of them* were made, and so acknowledge a creation, or an actual and immediate dependence of all things on God; but also that all things were created by the hand of God, in the same manner, and at the same time, which are delivered unto us in the Books of Moses by the Spirit of God, and so acknowledge a novelty, or no long existence of the creature.—

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accomplished, they were invariably driven into a dispute of the Creator, and of the manner of creation : truth once departed from, innumerable errors naturally sprang up, leading into wilds of opinion from which extrication was almost impossible ; every fancy, contradictory or accordant, being countenanced and received ; not, as may be thought, for the purpose of assisting or relieving, but more for that of redoubling doubt and increasing perplexity ; as though expecting, that, in the confusion, the original fallacy would be lost sight of. This it is against which the account of Moses is aimed ; of such character are the errors from which it is designed to rescue or preserve ; and, it is hardly to be credited, that, if this were the intention, or any part of the intention, he would have spoken in language so liable to the very different constructions to which the word “ day ” would be liable, if it were employed to signify any other portion of time than one natural day. *What* would be the portion of time ? Who is to construe a word the meaning of which does not appear from itself ? It is not in itself capable of two meanings ; and, moreover, if it were possible it should have two, there would be some contextual evidence ; and, where is there any ? The context gives evidence of an opposite bearing : “ God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Are we not in this sentence instructed in the division of the day into the evening and the morning ? Does it not tell us that this is the substantial



history of the first day? Can we by any force of construction deem ourselves justified in abandoning simplicity of language in the first expression of day and night as produced or composed severally of light and darkness? And, if they be simple in meaning, can the after terms of evening, of morning, and of day, be otherwise? If those words be not simple, what shall we say of that proclamation of God's will, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years?" Those lights *are* for signs, and seasons; and days, and years. Their literal meaning is fulfilled to our own present observation. The same observation informs us likewise that the day *is* divided, literally as is said, from the night. And, is not, also, light day? Is not darkness night? Are not the evening and the morning the entire day? The context proceeds on the ground, that a day, in literal sense, is intended; and the words throughout the chapter appear to be single in meaning. It evidences that the several expressions used in the account are to be received as literal, and that exact information is purposed. If, in the first case, the word "day" do not mean a day; if it do not mean a day as a space of time in which a certain portion of creation was accomplished,—neither has it the meaning of a day in any other; and we are yet in ignorance, and Moses wrote in ignorance, of the subject.

The objector, for so he must be called, who re-

ceives the word, affixing a different meaning, maintains that the appearances of the earth, on due and scientific examination, are such as to support his position that the world has been in existence and form a larger number of years than can be assigned to it from confining creation within a period of six days, and from considering the sacred history to be literal in its statement of that time; consequently, that the work was not completed in six days, the sole object of the expressions of "the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth," and "the sixth day," being to denote an equal definite term; and that, from the rules of geological science, which he exalts into infallibility, the world is thousands of years older than the literal expressions would make it to be<sup>1</sup>. Geology is an useful science, and highly to be esteemed, when it ministers to the truth; while it is as a servant, and not as a master; it is, notwithstanding, one which is exposed to a reception of many mere fancies, and to much mistake. It may be that the present age has attained to a height of perfectness in it not before reached unto; but, can the most skilful attain to a true perfectness? Can they determine the full effect of the curse passed on

<sup>1</sup> It is easy to see that though naturalists might have a range sufficiently wide within the limits prescribed by the book of Genesis, they very soon found themselves within too narrow bounds; and when they had succeeded in converting the six days employed in the work of creation into so many periods of indefinite length, their systems took a flight proportioned to the periods, which they could then dispose of at pleasure.—CUVIER.

the earth at the Fall? Can they say that the immediate effect might not have been that which thousands of years in succeeding operation would have been required to produce? Can they even say what was the full effect of the overwhelming of the world by the waters of the flood, when "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up?" Can they say that God has not purposely set a bar in this respect in order that men should not be certified upon it, so placing it with His "secret things?" If their arguments proceed upon a supposition or presumption that they possess clear ideas of the state of the earth before the Fall, they are to be told that they altogether err. Man cannot ascertain the primal condition of the earth. We may believe that it was deteriorated in the same degree in which man himself suffered deterioration; and, of man's condition in innocence, or the perfectness of his original nature, who pretends to an adequate conception? We can know or understand his condition but as it has become from the Fall. The like is to be said as concerning the earth. The knowledge of its former state is equally shut up from us. They, therefore, who would say that the earth is older than the Mosaical account declares it, impugn that account; and they argue, not so much that there was a longer time than is recorded to have been between the creation and the Fall, as that Moses fixes himself on a wrong date in regard of the Fall. That geological appearances could not have progressed before the Fall as since, is a position which no geologist can be

permitted to attack. The same causes were not in operation. He can form no conception of the earth then, from seeing what it is now. It is an essential of our religious belief, that the earth was as perfect, in comparison of its following state, as was man in comparison of his. Either became corrupted; in either were raised obstructions to the first design; in either were generated the "thorns and thistles" which were not of the previous nature: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." If the perfectness of the one be undescrivable by us, why not that of the other? We can describe only what we know; and, diligently as science is to be cultivated, and greatly as the cultivation of it is to be commended and valued, still, when once it sets itself up against the wisdom of Scripture, it is to be denounced as foolish, false and pernicious.

What now follows, but that they, who profess to receive Moses as an inspired writer, must conceit on nothing that is at variance with him? Still, is it the language of the objector, we do receive Moses, and are guiltless of any endeavour or wish to contradict him, or to weaken his authority; neither is our theory at real variance with him. We hold that, when Moses spoke of a day, he did not mean a

natural day, but a much longer term. It is not necessary at this time to enter into a geological discussion, or to recapitulate any of the arguments by which the position of the world's greater age, on geological reasoning, is attempted to be established. It is enough to shew, that Moses intended what he said to be taken in a plain meaning, he being, as admitted, an inspired historian; and then, if he and geology be, or appear to be, at issue, there is some failure, we may be satisfied, in the rules or understanding of the latter. If the veracity of Moses were the subject in dispute, we should be allowed to call in the testimony of geology where it is capable of giving it; but, where his veracity is admitted as a principle, as it is here, the testimony of geology cannot be allowed to operate against him. Neither do I deny, that, if there were obscurity in his writing, geology, or other science, according to its just province, might, on the same condition, be brought in aid; in aid, be it remembered, not contradiction. The whole question must depend on the meaning of this writer. Moses says, that "the evening and the morning were the first day;" and, so on; and that in every such portion of time such and such work was performed as he describes. The original word can receive no other construction than "day." To give it any other, we must shew that it is elsewhere so used by the same writer, and we must, also, have some collateral evidence that it is intended to be so used in this place; and, that that other signification is consistent with the general subject in all its parts.

We have already seen that the contextual evidence is in favour of the literal meaning. That Moses intended to say, in the first chapter of Genesis, that God made the world and all things therein in six days, is testified by the institution of the Sabbath. In the second chapter it is said, "And on the seventh day God ended his works which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all the work which he had created and made." If the word "day" in the first chapter of Genesis was intended to mean a thousand years, or other larger space of time than a single day, it must have the same signification in the second, the history of the Sabbath being a continuation of the history of the world to that point. So, if each day of the first chapter were one year, or a thousand years, the first Sabbath must have occupied the space of one year, or of a thousand years, as the case might have been; and, if it mean any term not ascertained by us, where is the Sabbath? If it had not been intended that the exact time of it should be known, the Sabbath neither would nor could have been appointed. It was a commemoration; but, of what? of the ending of the works of creation; and, how could that circumstance have been commemorated, unless exact information of it had been given? We have it, accordingly, that a Sabbath was appointed, and that it comprehended the same portion of time as each of the days of the first chapter comprehended; and,

satisfied on that head, it will become us to seek for additional evidence as to what that time was. In the twentieth chapter of Exodus Moses says, by the command of God, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates : *for* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : *wherefore* the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." It is stated that God made the world in six days, that he rested the seventh day, and that *therefore* he hallowed it. The words "day" and "days" are used ; and the conduct of the Israelites in respect of this injunction was formed upon them literally. If the time employed in creation had been otherwise, and a seventh day had been appointed, as a seventh portion of time, only because in the first instance seven portions of time, though severally of different term from itself, were occupied, there would have been a distinction expressed ; but there is none ; and we can, thus, give no other construction in the former than we are obliged to give in the latter case. The words in the latter are—"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day"—and the seventh day is, on this account, commanded to be hallowed as a Sabbath to the Lord ; and it was hallowed as His

Sabbath ; the person who spoke, who was the instrument for promulgation of the command, being the same person who had described the works of creation in the first chapter of Genesis as completed within six days, and who had in the second given the history and design of the institution of the Sabbath. It is denied by no parties that the seventh day was from of old the Israelitish Sabbath. But why was the seventh day appointed to be the Sabbath, except as the day on which God rested ; a particular, and not an indefinite portion of time,—indefinite, I mean, in the communication of the knowledge of it ; and because in six days, these, also, being after the same manner particular and not indefinite portions of time, he did his work ? The history of the seventh day, I repeat, is given to us as a part of the history of the world, in sequel to that of creation ; and it is put into such form and in such place as to tell us, as plainly as we can be told, that it was set to the observance of man in his state of innocence, and to lead us to conclude that Adam observed it as a Sabbath. I know there are some who contend that Adam fell on the day of his creation ; but hitherto I have seen no authority produced to verify the point ; it rests on supposition ; and supposition affords no help in the interpretation of Scripture. A future opportunity may be allowed me of entering into this question somewhat at large ; the discussion of it is not demanded by our present object ; if it were, I would not refuse it. I assume that Adam entered on the Sabbath day an innocent being ; at least, we



have no proof of the contrary. This granted, and each day of creation comprehending, according to the objector, a space of a thousand years, or any large portion of time, the Sabbath must have consisted of the same portion of time, and the innocence of man have continued during it. Is it probable, that, at the end of the so long term required by the geological objector, the tempter should have presented himself to Eve, and then for the first time have inquired, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The inquiry implied a newness of creation; and, not to insist on the portion of the thousand years, or other term, which Adam, on this theory, might have lived previously to the Sabbath, how does it agree with a date of antiquity? If Adam fell on the day of his creation, calling the day the larger term, we have it that he lived in the world a considerable time, some centuries, perhaps, we know not how many, without a Sabbath; that the works of creation were never sabbatically celebrated by him in innocence, and the rest in innocence never observed or enjoyed. Further still.—The life of Adam is related by Moses, in the fifth chapter of Genesis, to have extended over a space of nine hundred and thirty years. If the word "day" in the first chapter do not mean a day, does the expression of nine hundred and thirty years in the fifth mean nine hundred and thirty years, or what space of time? Making the word "day" to mean a longer term than of a day, the objector must receive the mentioned years of the life of

Adam to mean a shorter term than they express, and is thus driven into most extraordinary difficulty. What he adds to one, he must subtract from the other; and even then, and on his own calculation, he will not be right, the total age of Adam not amounting to the interval he supposes between his creation and his fall. "And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: and the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." It is undoubted that there was a Sabbath, whether before or after the Fall; and I maintain it to be as undoubted that the term of it was equal to the term of each day of creation; but, if the day were ought else than a day, we have either not a true account of the duration of the life of Adam, or we must conceive Moses so to change the meaning of his expressions as to seem determined that no one should gain a right knowledge from him. So does a sentence of folly hang over all who would wrest the language or lower the value of Scripture.

Upon these grounds, I adhere to the literal construction, in the point I have remarked on, of Moses in the two first chapters of Genesis. We discover no warrant for other. There is the plain meaning of the words; there is the instant following of fact. By admitting any other construction, what do we but invalidate the whole history? and, then, where

are we? What information can we deem certain, or probable even? In reference to the creation of the world and of himself, man, as a reasonable being, cannot be truly satisfied but on divinely-inspired authority. Theory, from its very boldness, may attract for a time, but will eventually become vain as a shadow that departeth, and is no more seen. It is as much revealed that God made the world in six days, and rested on the seventh day, as that He is the Omnipotent Creator; and I see no difference between the kind and extent of the presumption that would put any other meaning on the statement that it was God who created the world, and the kind and extent of that presumption which would assert His creation of it in other manner or other space of time than His revelation has displayed. Let us beware how we take licence with the expressions of Scripture; let us beware, lest we lose our hope of salvation, which hope rests on the integrity of Scripture, while we think we are but gratifying our pride, by advancing theories of ingenuity, and which themselves may fail to procure us the temporary applause we seek and do promise to us.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## GENESIS ii. 1, 2, 3.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which He had made ; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it : because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

WE have now considered the works of creation ; we have taken a view of the great doings of God in the accomplishment of that mighty scheme, the making and forming of the visible world, and all that is in it ; and here our proposal would seem to have reached its conclusion ; yet we have a point to notice, which is high in its demand, and in undoubted purpose with the general subject. We have observed the omnipotent Creator, proceeding step by step ; from nothing, calling whatever is into being ; and, from nothing, whatever is, arising on His command. We have observed Him regulating the heavens, the air, the earth, and the sea, with their several contents ; forming and animating man, under Himself the intended Lord ; honouring him ; and proclaiming

His design in him. After these things, we are told that He "rested;" and that the day on which He rested, and in remembrance thereof, He made holy unto him, ordaining it a Sabbath; consequently, it will be proper, seeing the important effect it was to have upon reasonable beings, that we likewise cast our view over this ordinance, looking, first, to the appointment of it, and, then, carrying ourselves on to the duties it imposes. This ordinance is delivered in exact terms and method by Moses in his account of the generations of the heavens and the earth: and it would imply a want of reverence in us, if we were to close our discussion without notice of it; indeed, as it is part of the history of creation, our plan would not be complete. The whole history of creation is contained in the two first chapters of Genesis; and the only additional matter, touched on, is the separation of the seventh day to be a day of rest. It would, besides, be ungrateful, and ill agreeing with professed feelings of piety, to notice God's works, and to omit mention of the obligation upon us with which He ended them. The history is given, in order to make us true and acceptable to God; and the Sabbath is a principal means in that purpose; so a consideration of it follows both in propriety and as of claim.

The words of the inspired historian, in the beginning of his second chapter, are these: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." God's creative work was perfected: He had made the world, given its inhabitants, and ap-

pointed its government; and He “rested.” It is said, also, “And on the seventh day God ended<sup>1</sup> his work which he had made;” from which expression some persons have taken occasion to infer, that the work itself was carried on into the seventh day, and completed actually in it, the cessation, or the rest, commencing in that instant of it at which it terminated. This, however, is obviously incorrect; it is contrary to the meaning of the original words, to the sense of the subject, and to the testimony of the individual by whom the statement is made. 1. It is the meaning of the original words, not that God did work, and ceased from work on the seventh day: but that in it He did no work at all; that He did not carry His work into that day, but that upon it and throughout it He rested. 2. The former chapter had described the works of creation as performed within the six days, and where they or any of them are again named in this chapter, it is only in the way of explanatory recapitulation: the works are described as “finished” before the seventh day is spoken of; and it was at the conclusion of the sixth day that “God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” It is subsequent to this that we are told “God rested”—that He did no more; and because on the seventh day He did no work, and none was left for Him to do, He made it

<sup>1</sup> Or rather, *had ended*, (as it may be translated,) for He did not work on the seventh day: but *rested from all His work which He had made*; having so completely finished it, that there remained no more to be done.—BISHOP PATRICK.

a Sabbath, blessing and sanctifying it. 3. The fourth commandment may be received as a commentary upon this passage, and it is its language, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: *wherefore* the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it;" to which no other interpretation can be given than that nothing of work was done on it; and that *therefore* it was appointed a day for ever to be kept holy; that it was blessed, and sanctified, and set apart from common use, being consecrated to God's special service and worship, and the rest and enjoyment of man.

In the Hebrew language, the word, which we translate "seven," signifies "fulness" or "completion;" and a little attention to that fact will serve to shew us how applicable the term is to the circumstance, and, therefore, how corroborative of the construction we advocate. All had been finished; within the six days the work was brought to its close, and the seventh was a day of total rest. These days formed a cycle. This was the origin of the week. Time, thereafter, was measured, in one of its divisions, by this rule; and, as if to testify to the reality of the case, we find, in various parts of the Scriptures, both fulness exhibited, and mysteries expressed, by the number seven. In the thirty-third chapter of Genesis, when Jacob went to meet Esau, and would do him utmost reverence, he "bowed himself to the ground seven times." In the fourth chapter of Leviticus, the priest, in the offering, is

commanded to "dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the vail of the sanctuary." In the second chapter of the first book of Samuel, Hannah, in her song, gives evidence of the generally considered fulness in the number, by saying, "The barren hath borne seven," as though that number went to the extent of desire; and this meaning of the expression is confirmed by the prophet Jeremiah, "She that hath borne seven languisheth." These few citations may suffice to shew, that a meaning of fulness was commonly attached to this number. Mysteries were, also, signified, under it. Pharaoh's dream was of seven fat kine, and seven lean; of seven full ears, and seven blasted. The seventh year was the sabbatical year; the seven times seventh, or forty-ninth year, was the year of jubilee. Many of the legal sacrifices were marked by this number, and many of the feasts<sup>1</sup>. In the book of the Revela-

<sup>1</sup> In memory of the primæval week of creation, revived among the Jews, after their departure from Egypt, their principal feasts, the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, lasted a week each. And it is remarkable that, from earliest times, sacrifices were offered by sevens. Thus, in the Patriarch Job's days, "seven bullocks and seven rams were offered up for a burnt offering," by the divine command. Job iv. 2. 8. The Chaldæan diviner, Balaam, built seven altars, and prepared seven bullocks, and seven rams. Numbers xxiii. 1. And the Cumæan sibyl, who came from Chaldæa, or Babylonia, gives the same directions to Æneas, that Balaam did to Balak :—

Nunc grege de intacto, septem mactare juvencos  
Præstiterit, totidem lectas, de more, bidentes.



tion, it is in frequent use: the churches, the candlesticks, the spirits, the stars, the lamps, the seals, the angels, the phials, are respectively seven. It is impossible, from such examples, but to think that the number had a very peculiar design; and the fulness and the sacredness, which are every where ascribed to it, do authorize us to conclude, that God had meaning in the appointment. We must not, certainly, indulge in conceptions which the Scriptures do not justify, and we must beware lest we lightly suppose a mysterious meaning; and the only intent, with which I am now arguing, is to shew, that those interpreters are correct who ascribe a sacred character to the seventh day, and for confirmation and satisfaction to ourselves that the seventh day is the hallowed Sabbath of the Lord. There is scarce any part of the world, where the number seven has not been taken to have an extraordinary meaning; and, what are we from hence to judge, if not that it was originally made sacred as marking the period of

“ It will be better now to sacrifice seven bullocks,  
And seven sheep, culled from the spotless herd,  
According to custom.”—ÆN. vi. 38.

And when the ark was brought home by David, the Levites offered seven bullocks, and seven rams. 1 Chron. xv. 26. And hence we may account for the peculiar sanctity of the seventh day, among the oldest Heathen writers, even after the institution of the Sabbath fell into disuse, and was lost among them. Thus Hesiod styles it, “ The seventh, a holy day.” And Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch says, “ Which all name, or *distinguish*: but *most*,” adds he, “ *are ignorant of the reason why*.”—DR. HALES.

time, in which the works of creation were performed, and the Sabbath was sanctified? It was the first arbitrary division of time, so to speak; for, the evening and the morning made the day; the full progress of the moon, the month; and the full circuit round the sun, the year. These sections have their naturally distinctive marks, or signs; but the week, or the space of seven days, has no natural mark, or sign; it is a portion of time, arbitrarily cut off, and distinguished but by its own content<sup>1</sup>; and, if we reject the Mosaic ordinance of the Sabbath, we know not whence it originated; and we have no better reason to give why the seventh day should be the completion of a week, or the day of rest, than

<sup>1</sup> This primeval measure of time, instituted as a memorial of the work of creation in six days, and of the ensuing Sabbath, or day of "rest," Genesis ii. 2, 3. was used by the Creator Himself in His denunciation of the Deluge, Genesis vii. 8. It was twice employed by Noah in the ark, Genesis viii. 10—12; and Jacob's marriage feast lasted "a week." It was therefore universally observed by Noah's descendants during the prevalence of the patriarchal religion; but when mankind degenerated and sunk into idolatry, the primitive institution was neglected, and at length lost. And the days of the week were dedicated by the Egyptians, Chaldæans, Syrians, &c. to the heavenly host, the sun, moon, and planets. Hence the Israelites, during their residence in Egypt, became infected with the idolatry of the country, and omitted, either voluntarily or by compulsion, the observance of the Sabbath, until it was revived in the desert, sanctioned by the miracle of the manna, which was intermitted on the Sabbath day, and solemnly re-enacted on mount Sinai, and made one of the laws of the decalogue, and its violation punished with death.

Some astronomers and chronologers have imagined that the

the eighth, or any other. It was, as we believe, originally and on its first occurrence made sacred, in memorial of the creation, and for rest; but, when corruption prevailed, it became perverted from its proper intention.

A Sabbath, we thus see, has been of command from the creation. The first seventh day was the first Sabbath. It never was undistinguished by peculiar honour in the sight of God; and the observance of it has been of obligation so long as the world has had its being. Of its high benefit, very little argument is necessary to persuade us. It was ordained in wisdom and benevolence; intended, as well to promote the comfort of man, as to maintain the honour of God. It is the preservative of religious knowledge and feeling. Unless some specific time were apportioned to God's service, it is much to be feared that man would at length be brought into utter forgetfulness of Him, and so religion be expelled from the World; but, where the Sabbath day is duly observed, there religion is secure. It is, moreover, useful as a day of rest, in the simple sense of the word. Man requires rest, in body and mind; and nothing could have enforced it but a divine

week was a natural measure of time, furnished by the four principal phases or quarters of the moon, which last about a week; but it was unquestionably derived from the divine institution at the creation, handed down by primitive tradition. This is evident from the word Sabbath, or Sabbata, denoting a week among the Syrians, Arabians, Christian Persians, and Ethiopians.

DR. HALE.

command. How benevolent, then, is the arrangement of the Creator, by which man is obliged, as matter of religion, to yield himself this rest, his own good being concerned in his obedience !

We may not doubt, that Adam and his immediate descendants observed this day, although no express mention that they did is made in the Bible.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> There is no mention, indeed, made of Adam's or Abel's, &c. observing this day ; which hath inclined many to conclude these words to have been written by way of anticipation : this day being set apart in after times by the law of Moses for God's service ; but, in their opinion, not till then. To which I cannot agree ; because it seems to me far more reasonable to think that God took care to preserve the memory of creation in the minds of mankind ; and the worship of Him the one only God, by whom it was created ; which could not be done by any means more effectually than by setting apart this day for that purpose ; which if He had not appointed, yet men being made religious creatures, I cannot but think they would have agreed upon some set time for the exercise of their religion, as well as some set place (though that be not mentioned neither) where to meet for divine service : and what time more proper wherein to honour their Creator with their sacrifices, praises, and thanksgivings, than this day ? which Philo well styles "*the birth-day of the world* : " which was so much observed all the world over, (though they forgot the reason,) that the seventh day, he observes, may be truly called *the universal festival*, kept by all people. Josephus speaks to the same purpose, and there is a great deal more said by Aristobulus, a Peripatetic philosopher, out of Hesiod, Homer, and others, in Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 13, c. 12, concerning the sacredness of the seventh day. Which though Mr. Selden endeavours to prove is meant of the seventh day of the month, not of the seventh day of the week ; yet we may look upon that as a remain of this ancient tradition. Which, in time, men forgot, as they did the

very practice of sacrifice would intimate that they observed it as being a religious rite; and, it being no over-strained inference, that, so near the institution of the Sabbath, the more solemn and significative religious rites would be holden on the day God had taken, in this understanding of it, to himself. Enoch, who walked with God; and Noah, who was perfect and upright in his generations, must have pleased God in this as in every other respect, or they had not met with His approval, and received His reward. That the greater part of the world did in time come to disregard it, is true; and that such disregard, with other wickedness, raised the displeasure of God, and caused the judgment of the flood, may be considered as equally so. Men were made religious creatures; and, on creation, this ordinance was appointed; it is not, therefore, likely that it should have been neglected by any who retained a right knowledge of God. It is probable that, during the sojournment of the Israelites in Egypt, they did not keep the Sabbath with the strictness, either of the

most natural duties; having so corrupted their ways, that there was nothing good among the generality of them. And therefore no wonder if they did not regard the service of God, every seventh day: to which I shall show, in due place, Noah, the only righteous man among them, had some regard. Which continued in the family of Abraham after the flood; Moses speaking of it, not long after their coming out of Egypt, (where it is not likely they were suffered to observe it, having no time free from their intolerable labours,) as a day known to them before the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. Exodus xvi. 23—25, 26.

BISHOP PATRICK.

first intention, or of the after command; and this is readily to be accounted for by the condition in which they were holden there. When that king "arose up" who "knew not Joseph," they were evil-intreated, and compelled into slavish employment. Their religious observances they might have adhered to with some sort of solemnity; but their taskmasters, we may presume, would not suffer them to refrain from work, even on their Sabbath day; and upon their deliverance from Egypt, and at the promulging of the law, it was necessary, by reason hereof, that the keeping of the Sabbath should be enjoined in the strongest manner; that the commandment of it should be given out almost in the shape and with the circumstance of a newly-enacted law; and they who argue that the Sabbath was first enjoined to the Israelites because it was so given out, may, with equal justice, argue that the first revelation, which God made of himself to mankind, was to the Israelites too. While compelled to neglect the Sabbath in any of its requirements, a knowledge of human nature will tell us that regard of it would be weakened; and we may conceive,—that, in the case of the Israelites, it *was* to a certain degree weakened; and, that He might bring them back to their original purpose, God proclaimed it almost as at the first, assigning the reason for which it had then been ordained. Most fit was the appointment of the seventh day, as being the day on which God rested, there being at the time no event of greater importance to be commemorated. It was to

be expected that men would look on it with feelings of gratitude and awe; with love to the Creator, and with admiration of His power and goodness. It would teach that on it it was their duty to cease from labour and the ordinary business of life, bending before Him more peculiarly in devout and humble service, and piously meditating on all His glorious works. It would recall Him to mind as the Creator, as the Governor, and as the Benefactor: it would shew how every thing depended upon Him; and how to Him allegiance was absolutely due.

It is right, in this place, to remark, that the day on which we, as Christians, keep our Sabbath, is not that on which God rested from His works. A brief notice of this is desirable, for the preventing of misapprehension. We have taken the first day of the week, whereas that was the seventh; and we have done so, because we believe there is sufficient warranty for the change in the New Testament<sup>1</sup>. But, nevertheless, though we have changed the day, we

<sup>1</sup> Instead of Saturday, the last day of the week, and the patriarchal and Jewish Sabbath, the Christian world has adopted Sunday, the first day of the week, in memory of the *new creation*, or resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a glorified body, on that day; which was also the day in which He made His successive manifestations of himself to His disciples after His resurrection, and the day of the *first fruits* of the Christian Church on Whitsunday, thence consecrated to edifying worship, and called the Lord's Day in the Apostolic age; Acts ii. 41; xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 20; xvi. 2; Rev. i. 20; consequently the change must have been sanctioned, and authorized by Him who was "Lord even of the Sabbath."—DR. HALES.

have made no change in the portion of time; that remains as in the first appointment; and, while our present Sabbath celebrates the resurrection of our blessed Saviour from the dead, it still, as being a seventh day, the same originally directed portion of time, draws not off our minds from the stupendous works of creation. Both blessings are celebrated by us, creation and redemption; the former, by which we were called into being: and the latter, without which, after the Fall, it had been better had we not been called into being. I do not enter into the reasons, establishing the validity of this change. It is no part of our present purpose; our concern is now, not with redemption, but with creation. The original Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, and its design is perpetual, notwithstanding that an additional motive may be derived to it. Additional motive does not lessen the original obligation; nor does change of the day make change in the method of it. The deliverance from the bondage of Egypt was declared to the Israelites to be additional motive for their observance of the Sabbath; but they were not therefore to throw aside or undervalue the first reason. In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy we read, "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee,"—referring to the issue of the command in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, where it is said,—"*For* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: *wherefore* the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it;"—and in this of Deuteronomy is added the further reason,



“Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day”—*therefore* He renewed the command; having chosen the Israelites for His people, He repeated it to them; and, because He had delivered them from bondage, He asserted His right to their obedience in better manner to what had, nevertheless, been before incumbent upon them. The Sabbath, observed by the Israelites, was, thus, universal and particular. It was universal, as regarded the works of creation, and, with them, obligatory upon all men; it was particular, as regarded their deliverance from Egypt, in which reason of it none other could be associated with them. We argue for the observance of the day on similar grounds; on the circumstance which at the first made it holy, and on the resurrection of Christ; and, on either, it is now bounden on all who believe in God. In truth, nor one nor other consideration ought to be absent from our minds. The Sabbath day is punctually to be honoured: it instructs us to look back to the great events it commemorates, and to apply ourselves only to the things which are suitable to its character. We are taught by it to look unto God as our Creator, Governor, and Support; and, likewise, as our Redeemer, who has saved us, after that the blessing of creation had been abused, from the wretchedness and death that were justly incurred.

In whatever light, and in whatever operation, the

benevolence of God is regarded, it is admirable and lovely. There is nothing in which it is not visible: there is none of His works, in which it is not influential and pre-eminent. It is to be recognized throughout the whole of creation, in every part of it, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational. Every design has a purpose of kindness, and that kindness is invariably directed by truest wisdom. The qualities and properties, to whomsoever and whatsoever assigned, all tend unto usefulness; its proper place is given to every thing, with right adaptation to its end. In ourselves, in what is bestowed upon us, and in what is provided for us, how mercifully considerate is God! In the works of irrational creation, all had prospect to the service of the rational being, whom He was about to form, and to constitute their lord. The earth, the air, the sea; the beasts, the cattle, the fowl, the fishes, the creeping things; the tree, the plant, the herb,—were appointed to his dominion, and in some instance of them made to minister to his use. The very heavens, with the lights in their firmament, are in effect man's property. And now, now that the whole work was finished; that the world, with all its stores, was complete; that man himself was endued with every capacity requisite for the station in which he was placed, even now His mindfulness of him ceased not; even when He rested, He thought of benefit. He rested; and, because He rested, He took occasion to bless the day, and to make it a blessing to His creatures; He pronounced it and appointed it to be holy; He appointed it to be a day on which the more special service of Himself

should be celebrated, on which man should withdraw his attention from the common cares of life, and fix it on his Creator and Benefactor. He thus gave him the best relaxation a reasonable being could have, the relaxation which consists in the laying aside the business of earth, in forgetting awhile the grosser part of his nature, and raising himself to the purity and excellence of immortality and heaven.

The benevolence of this ordinance, I repeat, is manifest, and its wisdom also. It is benevolent, because it compels man to rest; it forces him to an abstinence from toil. It is wise, for it preserves alive the remembrance of the Creator and His doings. It is a perpetual witness and reminder of Him that made the world, and to whom, because He made it, we are to look, and whom we are to obey, as our Father and Lord. It is the strong-hold of religious principle; and, without religious principle, what should we be?—Immortal beings, yet ignorant of the hopes of immortality; subjects of the great God of heaven, yet with no love or knowledge of Him in our hearts and minds. But, having a Sabbath; having a day, on which it is matter of more prominent duty to worship God, and to receive religious edification, it can hardly happen that we should not profit, unless we be very perversely determined to set ourselves against our true and acknowledged welfare. We cannot use the seventh day as a day of rest, without inquiring into the purpose of it; and what will be the answer, but of our God and of our duty to Him? It is not, let us carefully remember, an ordinance to be neglected or observed at pleasure.

sure, as caprice or self-will may dictate ; it is one, to be observed in consistency with the design of the original institution, and in the manner in which subsequent commandments have directed. It is binding on all men. It was given, in Adam, to the whole human race. It was renewed in solemn form to the Israelites, because, in the general corruption of religion and morals, God chose them to be the witnesses of His truth and holiness, and the vehicle of His redemption to mankind ; and that renewal of it to them, be it again stated, is no proof that the Sabbath was Judaical only. It was always universal, in its design and obligation ; and that men had neglected it, so neglected it as to make a solemn renewal of it necessary to His own chosen people, did not by any means or in any construction invalidate the original and general obligation ; and, accordingly, we see, that, wherever and whenever men have been invited to a knowledge of the truth in God, a primary and essential care has been the observance of the Sabbath. God blessed it, and sanctified it ; he released it from secular and delivered it to religious purposes ; He commanded it to be kept holy ; He directed it to be made His own day—"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt do no work." If the purposes of it be religious, secular concerns must not be allowed any interference ; for they would be destructive of its religious character, which is exclusive. Its own true purposes, and man's duty in it, are plain. They are not such as may be refined upon, or explained away ; they mean a dedication of the day unto God, than which nothing

can give us a more cheering rest ; and, whatever would withdraw us or our thoughts from God, is a violation of its sanctity. It is not man's day in the worldly sense, although it is his day in the best sense, drawing him nearer to God, presenting him at His footstool in his highest capacity, and preparing him for the state of everlasting enjoyment.

Let us do our utmost endeavours to make ourselves partakers of the exalted benefits, which this dispensation offers to us. Let us honour the Sabbath, from motives of desire to our own happiness ; and let us honour it, likewise, from a principle of duty and gratitude to Him who ordained it, who Himself rested on it, and has commanded us to rest, as well from a regard of His own majesty and honour, as for provision of a means whereby future and unending blessedness might be secured to ourselves. If, therefore, we would please God ; if we would serve our own interests, in their highest point, let us "hallow God's Sabbath, making it a delight and honourable," by calling to mind His power, and His wisdom, and His goodness, and by every effort to deserve, more and more, the continuance of His most gracious loving-kindness and favour.

THE END.

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